OREGON
WATERSHED
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Hybrid Board Meeting

Independence, Oregon

April 22-23, 2025

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Meeting Agenda
April 22-23, 2025

Independence City Hall
555 S Main St
Independence, OR 97351

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

- **YouTube Streaming/Recording**: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOwLt4Sp--i1KEa_OA. There may be a slight delay when streaming the meeting content.
- **Zoom/Phone**:
  - **April 22:** Dial 1 669 900 6833, ID number: 880 9590 6262 and passcode: 124073 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88095906262?pwd=4olRa33gfAT4c80Qa2nGlngHWUs77V.1
  - **April 23:** Dial 1 669 900 6833, ID number: 862 1722 3586 and passcode: 336108 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86217223586?pwd=0itOMu7Gf2WRMbDabBUO7H1afURKeQ.1

The board materials are available at: https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/about-us/Pages/board/2025-Apr.aspx

For each agenda item, the time listed is approximate. Anyone interested in a particular agenda item is encouraged to give ample time and listen in to the meeting at least 30 minutes before the approximate agenda item time.

Public comment
OWEB welcomes written or verbal public comment on any agenda item. All written comments and requests to make verbal comments to the board should be submitted using OWEB's Public Comment Form. The deadline for submitting written comments and requests to make verbal comments is **5:00 pm Thursday, April 17, 2025**.

Written comments will be provided to the board before the meeting. Verbal comments are limited to three minutes and will be heard in the public comment periods (Agenda Items B, F, G, I, and M).

For additional information on providing public comment, please refer to our website https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/about-us/Pages/board/meetings.aspx

Tuesday, April 22

Business Meeting – 8:30 am

A. Board Member Comments (8:35 am)

Board representatives from state and federal agencies will provide updates on issues related to the natural resource agency they represent. This is also an opportunity for public and tribal board members to report on their recent activities and share information and comments on a variety of watershed enhancement and community conservation-related topics. *Information item*.

B. Public Comment (10:15 am)

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

C. Directors Updates (10:30 am)

Executive Director Sara O'Brien and staff will update the board on agency business. *Information item.*

D. General Board Business (11:10 am)

This time is reserved for the board to act on routine items. Items for potential board action include the meeting minutes from January 2025, Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program conservation easement time extensions, and awarding effectiveness monitoring funds from the Quantifying Outputs and Outcomes line item of the spending plan. *Action item*.

E. Grantee Panel Presentation – Luckiamute Confluence (11:20 am)

Scott Youngblood from Oregon Parks and Recreation, Aubrey Cloud from Luckiamute Watershed Council), and Emily Day from Greenbelt Land Trust will present on past and planned restoration at the Luckiamute State Natural Area and Luckiamute Confluence. This partnership has been collaborating for more than 15 years to create one of the largest forested floodplain networks along the Willamette River. *Information item*.

F. Fall 2024 Open Solicitation Grant Offering Board Awards (1:00 pm)

Restoration Grant Program Manager Eric Williams and Regional Program Representatives will review the Fall 2024 Open Solicitation grant offering and funding recommendations. *Action Item.*

Public Comment

This time is reserved for public comment on the Fall 2024 Open Solicitation grant offering and funding recommendations. Only comments about this specific item will be accepted during this portion of the meeting. ***NOTE:*** Verbal public comment specific to this agenda item will be heard at approximately 2:00 pm.

Board Deliberation and Awards

The board will consider grant applications submitted through the Fall 2024 Open Solicitation grant offering. Applications, supporting materials, and funding recommendations will be discussed and acted on by the board.

G. Fall 2024 Water Acquisitions Grant Offering Board Awards (2:55 pm)

Water Acquisition and Capacity Coordinator Brian Wolcott and Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager Renee Davis will provide an overview of the Fall 2024 Water Acquisition grant offering process and present staff recommendations for grant awards. *Action Item.*

Public Comment

This time is reserved for public comment on the Fall 2024 Water Acquisition grant offering and funding recommendations. Only comments about this specific item will be accepted during this portion of the meeting. ***NOTE:*** Verbal public comment specific to this agenda item will be heard at approximately 3:25 pm.

Board Deliberation and Awards

The board will consider grant applications submitted through the Fall 2024 Water Acquisition grant offering. Applications, supporting materials, and funding recommendations will be discussed and acted on by the board.

H. Land Acquisitions – Willamette Confluence Project (4:25 pm)

Land Acquisitions Coordinator Miriam Forney, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager Renee Davis, and representatives from McKenzie River Trust will update the board on the Willamette Confluence Preserve project and request the board approve a partial release of the conservation easement. *Possible Action Item.*

Wednesday, April 23

Business Meeting – 8:30 am

I. Public Comment (8:35 am)

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

J. 2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan Overview (9:05 am)

Deputy Director Stephanie Page and Business Operations Manager/Fiscal Officer Miriam Scharer will present an overview of the spending plan, estimated funds available for board allocation for 2025-2027, and recommended amounts to allocate to grant programs, and seek board feedback. *Information Item.*

K. 2025-2027 Spending Plan – Governor's Priorities Proposal (10:50 am)

Governor Kotek's Natural Resources Senior Policy Advisor Geoff Huntington will provide an overview of plans for the Governor's Priorities spending plan line item, both for funds remaining in the 2023-2025 spending plan and for the 2025-2027 biennium, and seek board feedback. *Information Item.*

L. Committee Updates (1:00 pm)

Executive Director Sara O'Brien will provide updates on committee topics to the full board. *Information item*

M. Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Offering Board Awards (1:30 pm)

Drinking Water Source Protection Specialist Audrey Squires and Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager Renee Davis will provide an overview of the Drinking Water Source Protection grant offering process and present staff recommendations for grant awards. *Action Item.*

Public Comment

This time is reserved for public comment on the Drinking Water Source Protection grant offering and funding recommendations. Only comments about this specific item will be accepted during this portion of the meeting. ***NOTE:*** Verbal public comment specific to this agenda item will be heard at approximately 2:15 pm.

Board Deliberation and Awards

The board will consider grant applications submitted through the Drinking Water Source Protection grant offering. Applications, supporting materials, and funding recommendations will be discussed and acted on by the board.

N. Natural and Working Lands Program Preview (3:25 pm)

Water and Climate Coordinator Alexa Schmidt will provide an overview of the Natural & Working Lands program in preparation for board action and grant awards at the July meeting. *Information Item.*

O. Other Business (3:55 pm)

This item is reserved for other matters that may come before the board. *Information item.*

Meeting Rules and Procedures

Meeting Procedures

Generally, agenda items will be taken in the order shown. However, in certain circumstances, the board may elect to take an item out of order. To accommodate the scheduling needs of interested parties and the public, the board may also designate a specific time at which an item will be heard.

Please be aware that topics not listed on the agenda may be introduced during the meeting.

Oregon's Public Meetings Law requires disclosure that board members may meet for meals when OWEB meetings convene.

Voting Rules

The OWEB Board has 18 members. Of these, 11 are voting members and 7 are non-voting advisory members. For purposes of conducting business, OWEB's voting requirements are divided into 2 categories – general business and action on grant awards.

Action on General Business

For general business, a quorum is **6 voting members**. General business requires a majority of **all** voting members to pass a resolution (not just those present), so general business resolutions require affirmative votes of **at least 6 voting members**. Typical resolutions include adopting,

amending, or appealing a rule, providing staff direction, etc. These resolutions cannot include a funding decision.

Action on Funding Decisions
Per ORS 541.360(4), special requirements apply when OWEB considers action on funding decisions such as grant awards. This includes a special **quorum of at least 8 voting members** present to act on grant awards, and affirmative votes of at least six voting members. Regardless of the number of members present, **if 3 or more voting members** object to an award of funds, the proposal will be rejected.

Executive Session
The board may convene in a confidential executive session where, by law, only press members and OWEB staff may attend. Others will be asked to leave the room during these discussions, which usually deal with current or potential litigation. Before convening such a session, the presiding board member will make a public announcement and explain necessary procedures.

More Information
If you have any questions about this agenda or the board's procedures, please contact Nicole Bettinardi, OWEB Board Liaison, at 503-428-1804 or Nicole.BETTINARDI@OWEB.oregon.gov.

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.

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Membership

Voting Members
Elizabeth Agpaoa, *Board of Forestry*
Barbara Boyer, *Board Co-Chair, Board of Agriculture*
Bruce Buckmaster, *Public*
Kelly Coates, *Board Co-Chair, Public, Tribal Representative*
Russ Hoeflich, *Public*
Mark Labhart, *Fish and Wildlife Commission*
Liza Jane McAlister, *Public*
Lindsay McClary, *Public*
Jamie McLeod-Skinner, *Public*
Mark Webb, *Environmental Quality Commission*
Woody Wolfe, *Water Resources Commission*

Non-voting Members
Chris Allen, *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*
Dan Brown, *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*
Aaron Curtis, *U.S. Bureau of Land Management*
Jessi Kershner, *Oregon State University Extension Service*
Eric Murray, *National Marine Fisheries Service*
Brian Staab, *U.S Forest Service*
Claire Tachella, *U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service*

Contact Information
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OWEB Executive Director – Sara O'Brien
Sara.E.O'BRIEN@OWEB.oregon.gov

OWEB Board Liaison and Executive Assistant– Nicole Bettinardi
Nicole.BETTINARDI@OWEB.oregon.gov

2025 Board Meeting Schedule
January 28-29 – Virtual
April 22-23 – Independence
July 22-23 – Pendleton
Oct 28-29 – Astoria

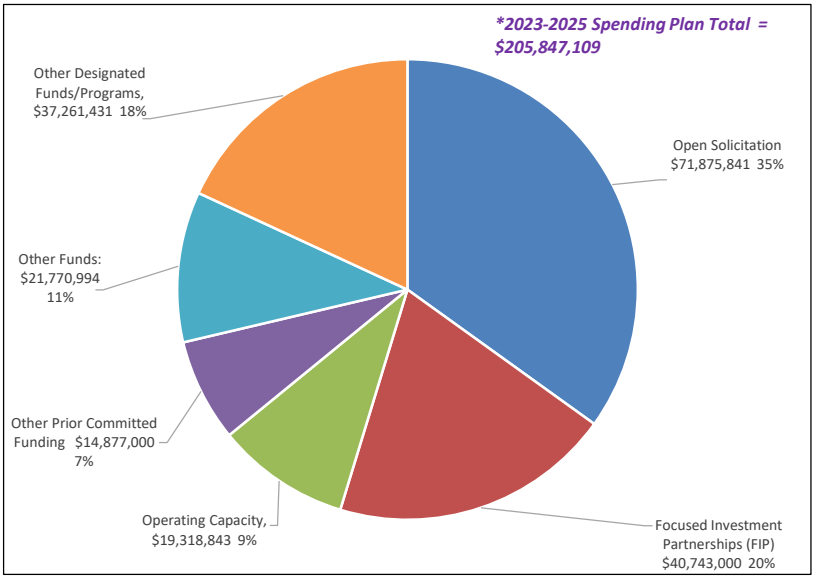
For online access to staff reports and other OWEB publications, visit our website: www.oregon.gov/OWEB.

OWEB 2023-2025 GRANT FUNDS SPENDING PLAN

APRIL 2025 Board Meeting

	GRANTS	2023-2025 Spending Plan (As of January 2025)	April 2025 Proposed Changes	2023-2025 Spending Plan Total	Awarded to Date	April 2025 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Balance after Awards
1	**Open Solicitation:**							
2	Restoration	37,491,933		37,491,933	27,193,807	10,083,738	37,277,545	214,388
3	Technical Assistance			-				
4	Restoration TA	6,800,000	845,119	7,645,119	4,972,362	2,672,757	7,645,119	-
5	CREP TA	1,525,841		1,525,841	1,525,841		1,525,841	-
6	Cultural Resources	1,000,000	(859,018)	140,982	-		-	140,982
7	Engagement	2,000,000	13,899	2,013,899	1,414,823	599,076	2,013,899	-
8	Monitoring grants	4,508,067		4,508,067	4,508,067		4,508,067	-
9	Land and Water Acquisition	8,500,000		8,500,000	2,280,584		2,280,584	6,219,416
10	Weed Grants	3,250,000		3,250,000	3,250,000		3,250,000	-
11	Small Grants	2,800,000		2,800,000	2,800,000		2,800,000	-
12	Quantifying Outputs and Outcomes	1,000,000		1,000,000	586,031	300,000	886,031	113,969
13	Tribal Project Development	1,000,000		1,000,000	1,000,000		1,000,000	-
14	2024 Immediate Fire Response Grants	2,000,000		2,000,000	2,000,000		2,000,000	-
15	**TOTAL**	**71,875,841**	**-**	**71,875,841**	**51,531,515**	**13,655,571**	**65,187,086**	**6,688,755**
16	**% of Total Core Programs**			**48.95%**				
17	**% of OWEB Spending Plan total**			**42.64%**				
18	**Focused Investments:**							
19	John Day Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	4,000,000		4,000,000	-
20	Baker Sage Grouse	2,348,000		2,348,000	2,348,000		2,348,000	-
21	Warner Aquatic Habitat	1,857,000		1,857,000	1,857,000		1,857,000	-
22	Rogue Forest Rest. Partnership	1,800,000		1,800,000	1,800,000		1,800,000	-
23	Clackamas Partnership	2,309,000		2,309,000	2,309,000		2,309,000	-
24	Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network	2,715,000		2,715,000	2,715,000		2,715,000	-
25	East Cascades Oak & Fire Partnership	2,433,000		2,433,000	2,433,000		2,433,000	-
26	Siuslaw Coho Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	4,000,000		4,000,000	-
27	Coos Basin Coho Partnership	3,859,000		3,859,000	3,859,000		3,859,000	-
28	Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative	3,922,000		3,922,000	3,922,000		3,922,000	-
29	Hood River Basin Partnership	2,933,414		2,933,414	2,933,414		2,933,414	-
30	Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	4,000,000		4,000,000	-
31	Oregon Sage-Grouse Partnership	2,004,839		2,004,839	2,004,839		2,004,839	-
32	Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative	510,610		510,610	510,610		510,610	-
33	New FIP Solicitation	1,551,137		1,551,137	-		-	1,551,137
34	FI Effectiveness Monitoring	500,000		500,000	320,000		320,000	180,000
35	**TOTAL**	**40,743,000**	**-**	**40,743,000**	**39,011,863**	**-**	**39,011,863**	**1,731,137**
36	**% of Total Core Programs**			**27.75%**				
37	**% of OWEB Spending Plan total**			**24.17%**				
38	**Operating Capacity:**							
39	Capacity grants - Watershed Councils (WC)	9,486,708		9,486,708	9,353,795		9,353,795	132,913
40	Capacity grants - Soil & Water Conservation Dist (SWCD)	8,307,135		8,307,135	8,307,135		8,307,135	-
41	Statewide org partnership support	525,000		525,000	525,000		525,000	-
42	Organizational Collaboration	-		-	-		-	-
43	Partnership Technical Assistance	1,000,000		1,000,000	672,439		672,439	327,561
44	**TOTAL**	**19,318,843**	**-**	**19,318,843**	**18,858,369**	**-**	**18,858,369**	**460,474**
45	**% of Total Core Programs**			**13.16%**				
46	**% of OWEB Spending Plan total**			**11.46%**				
47	**Other-Prior Committed Funding:**							
48	CREP Costshare	750,000		750,000	750,000		750,000	-
49	Governor's Priorities	1,000,000		1,000,000	1,000,000		1,000,000	-
50	Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership	330,000		330,000	330,000		330,000	-
51	Strategic Implementation Areas	1,500,000		1,500,000	1,500,000		1,500,000	-
52	Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership	350,000		350,000	350,000		350,000	-
53	Klamath Post Dam Removal Watershed Restoration/KRRC-Contingency	10,947,000		10,947,000	10,947,000		10,947,000	-
54	**TOTAL**	**14,877,000**	**-**	**14,877,000**	**14,877,000**	**-**	**14,877,000**	**-**
55	**% of Total Core Programs**			**10.13%**				
56	**% of OWEB Spending Plan total**			**8.82%**				
57	**TOTAL Core Programs**	**146,814,684**	**-**	**146,814,684**	**124,278,747**	**13,655,571**	**137,934,318**	**8,880,366**

	GRANTS	2023-2025 Spending Plan (As of January 2025)	April 2025 Proposed Changes	2023-2025 Spending Plan Total	Awarded to Date	April 2025 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Balance after Awards
58	**Other Funds:**							
59	Water Acquisitions	9,439,958		9,439,958	959,701	229,639	1,189,340	8,250,618
60	Watershed Natural Climate Solutions (NCS) Fund (From Natural & Working Lands Fund)							
61	Funding for NCS projects in Open Solicitation (OS)	1,500,000		1,500,000	-		-	1,500,000
62	Funding for NCS projects in OAHP	750,000		750,000	-		-	750,000
63	Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP)	5,081,036		5,081,036	5,081,036		5,081,036	-
64	Drinking Water Source Protection Grants							-
65	DWSP-General Fund	1,000,000		1,000,000		1,000,000	1,000,000	-
66	DWSP-Lottery Bond Funds	4,000,000		4,000,000		4,000,000	4,000,000	-
67	**TOTAL**	**21,770,994**	**-**	**21,770,994**	**6,040,737**	5,229,639	**11,270,376**	**10,500,618**
68	**% of OWEB Spending Plan total**			**12.91%**				
69	**TOTAL OWEB Spending Plan**	**168,585,678**	**-**	**168,585,678**	**130,319,484**	**18,885,210**	**149,204,694**	**19,380,984**
70	**Other Designated Funds/Programs**							
71	Or Dept of Fish & Wildlife-PCSRF (Federal Funds)	13,984,821		13,984,821	13,984,821		13,984,821	-
72	Or Dept of Forestry-Forest Collaborative (Other Funds)	500,000		500,000	500,000		500,000	-
73	Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission-Intensively Monitored Watersheds (Other Funds)	600,000		600,000	600,000		600,000	-
74	Bureau of Land Management - Good Neighbor Authority (Federal Funds)	15,000,000		15,000,000	15,000,000		15,000,000	-
75	Natural Resource Conservation Service - Farm Bill Technical Support (Federal Funds)	743,110		743,110	743,110		743,110	-
76	PacifiCorp Interim Measure 11 (IM11) (Other Funds)	6,433,500		6,433,500	6,433,500		6,433,500	-
77	**TOTAL**	**37,261,431**	**-**	**37,261,431**	**37,261,431**	**-**	**37,261,431**	**-**
78	**OWEB Spending Plan and Other Designated Funds/Programs**	**205,847,109**	**-**	**205,847,109**	**167,580,915**	**18,885,210**	**186,466,125**	**19,380,984**



THE APPROACH WE TAKE

Our grantmaking work is characterized by…

Involving people and communities broadly and in partnership

- Involving community members with diverse interests at all levels
- Collaborating and communicating to promote community ownership of watershed health
- Building and mobilizing partnerships

Using best available science supported by local knowledge

- Identifying the root cause
- Basing approaches on the best available science
- Incorporating local knowledge, experience, and culture
- Catalyzing local energy and investment

Investing with long-term outcomes for climate resilience

- Taking the long view on projects and interventions
- Maintaining progress into the future

Demonstrating impact through meaningful monitoring & evaluation

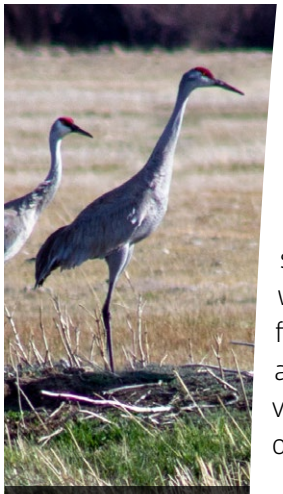
- Measuring and communicating watershed change and community impact
- Increasing appropriate accountability
- Changing course when something isn't working

Reaching and involving underrepresented populations

- Including voices and perspectives that are not typically at the table
- Ensuring information is accessible to diverse audiences

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) provides grants to help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies.

Eligible applicants include not-for-profit organizations, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Tribes, Watershed Councils, political subdivisions of the state that are not state agencies, schools, community colleges, Oregon State institutions of higher education, and independent not-for-profit institutions of higher education. State and federal agencies are not eligible grantees but are often partners on OWEB-funded projects. In addition to those listed below, OWEB may offer grant types based on legislative priorities.



Land Acquisition

Water Acquisition

Projects that acquire interests in water from willing sellers. Acquisitions result in legally or contractually protected instream flow to maintain or restore streamflows for the benefit of watersheds and habitats for native fish or wildlife. Eligible applicants are entities qualified to develop valid water rights transactions and oversee the desired outcomes.

Coho Habitat Restoration

Focused Investment Partnerships (FIPs)

Landscape-scale restoration investments that address board-identified Focused Investment Priorities of significance to the state. Successful FIPs achieve clear and measurable ecological outcomes; use integrated, results-oriented approaches as identified through a strategic action plan; and are implemented by a high-performing partnership. Funding supports partnerships with up to $12 million over 6 years. Initiatives must support limiting factors outlined in a federal recovery and/or state conservation plan(s). Funds are awarded through project-level grants in restoration, technical assistance, engagement, monitoring, and land and water acquisitions.

Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish (FIP)

Land Acquisition

Projects involving the purchase of interests in land from willing sellers. Projects must maintain or restore watersheds and habitat for native fish or wildlife. Interests in land include fee simple title and conservation easements.

Monitoring

Projects that monitor, gather, analyze, and share watershed data with the public. May describe current watershed conditions, establish trends about watershed conditions, or evaluate specific before-and-after effects of a restoration or acquisition project.

Restoration

Projects that protect or restore watershed functions for instream, riparian, upland, and wetland or estuarine habitat.

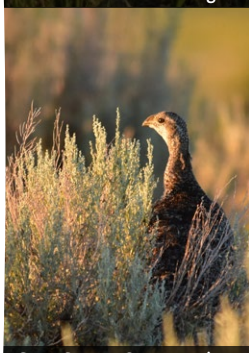
Engagement

Projects that communicate and engage with landowners, organizations, and the community about the need for, feasibility, and benefits of a specific eligible restoration, acquisition, or resource assessment/planning project(s) within an identified geography. Education projects are not eligible.

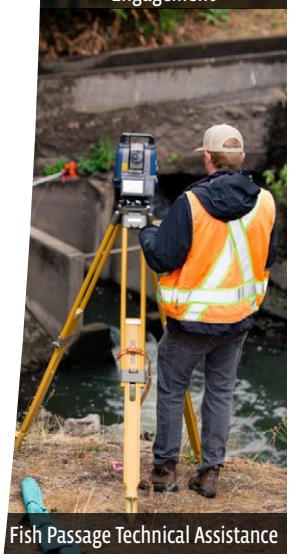
Technical Assistance

Projects that develop a technical design or implementation plan for restoration, including consideration for compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act.

Seine Net Monitoring



Sage Grouse Conservation Engagement



Fish Passage Technical Assistance

Small Grants

Easy-to-engage-in, competitive grant program. Awards up to $15,000 for restoration practices principally carried out on private lands.

Who may apply*: Watershed Councils, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, or Tribes may apply for a small grant on behalf of any of the following entities: Landowner, not-for-profit institution, private, state, or independent institution of education, or local, state, or federal agency.

Forest Collaboratives

Projects that increase restoration efforts on federal forests statewide by enhancing and strengthening the effectiveness of local collaboratives. This grant program was developed by OWEB and the Oregon Department of Forestry.

Who may apply*: local collaborative groups engaged in forest restoration and/or stewardship on federal forests in Oregon (forests managed by the US Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management). Eligible grantees must have 501(c)3 status or a signed agreement with an eligible fiscal sponsor. This can be a non-profit community-based organization, unit of local government or Tribal government.

Weed Board Grants

(Oregon Department of Agriculture)

On-the-ground projects to control weeds and state-listed noxious weeds. Projects may include survey, outreach, monitoring, or research if required to complete the control portion of the project.

Coastal Wetlands

These federal grant funds are awarded to OWEB to use in local grant investments for restoration partners to acquire, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands. All projects must have long-term protection in place to ensure conservation (such as a termed easement).

Photo credits this side: Curry SWCD, Southern Willamette Forest Collective, Curry SWCD. Photo credits other side: Oregon Desert Land Trust, USFWS, Warner Basin Partnership . Right: Coquille Watershed Association, USFWS, North Clackamas Urban Watershed Council.

Small Grant Restoration

Forest Collaborative

District & Council Outreach

Council Capacity

Grants that help support the operations of effective watershed councils that engage people and communities in their watershed to participate in collaborative, voluntary restoration and protection of native fish or wildlife habitat and natural watershed functions to improve water quality or stream flows.

Who may apply*: Watershed councils that meet OWEB's eligibility criteria (OAR 695-040-0030)

District Capacity

Grants that support Oregon's 45 soil and water conservation districts to work with landowners in their communities to conserve natural resources and lend support to the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Water Quality Management Program.

Who may apply*: Oregon's 45 soil and water conservation districts.

Partnership Technical Assistance

Grant investments that help support existing partnerships to create or enhance and existing strategic action plans, to elevate the partnership's current level of performance, and to support partnership capacity.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Technical Assistance (CREP TA)

Grants that help local partners deliver the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, a federal-state partnership that restores streamside areas on agricultural lands. CREP TA grants support grantee costs for staffing, travel, outreach, technical planning, and project implementation.

***Note:** some grant offerings have different eligibility requirements described here.

For more information on these and additional programs, visit our website: oregon.gov/oweb

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Public Comment

for Agenda Items B, F, G, I, and M

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

Submitted written public comment will be published in a supplemental document after the board meeting and posted on OWEB's website: https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/about-us/Pages/board/2025-Apr.aspx

OREGON
WATERSHED
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item C

Director's Updates

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Buena Vista ferry, Max Rae, cc

2025-2028 Strategic Plan

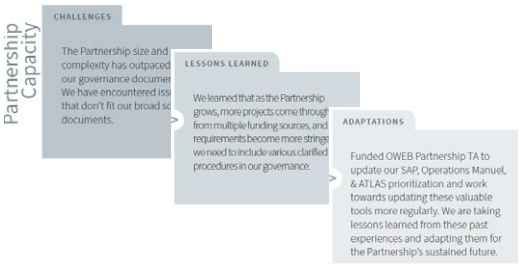
Quarterly Report to the Board | April 2025

Mission: To help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies.

Each quarterly report describes key accomplishments under Strategies that have been identified for each of the six Strategic Plan priorities. See the last page for the full list of Strategies, and a summary of when accomplishments were reported throughout the calendar year.

Priority 1

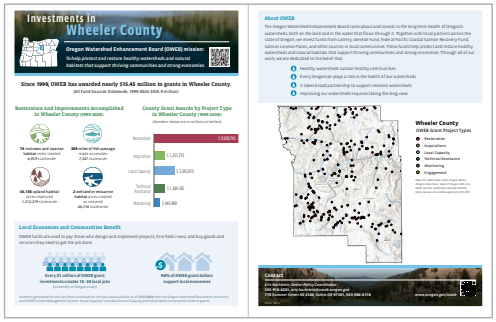
Build awareness of the relationship between people and watershed protection and restoration.



Lessons Learned on Partnership Capacity are included in FIP Progress Tracking Reports.

Strategy 1.3 OWEB staff started **quarterly check-ins with Partnership Technical Assistance grantees** to serve as a forum for sharing lessons learned with one another and for OWEB staff to answer questions, share any agency updates, and gain understanding of grantee needs.

OWEB Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) staff meet with each FIP Partnership Coordinator on a regular basis to answer questions, share program updates, and gain understanding of Partnership progress and challenges.



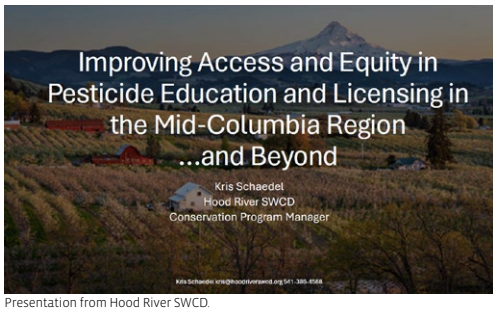
County Investments may be found on OWEB's website.

Strategy 1.1 OWEB shared **restoration news stories** in social media and on its website about post-fire restoration work, urban watersheds, and the new Natural and Working Lands funds.

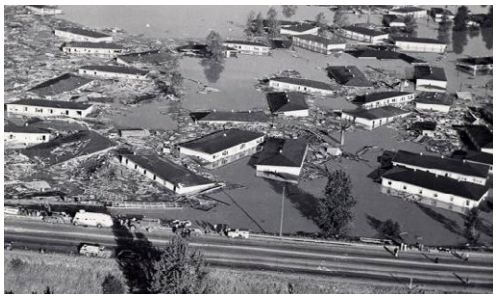
County Fact Sheets describing investments and restoration work in each county have been updated on OWEB's website and shared with grantees through Regional Program Representatives.

Priority 2

Engage the diversity of Oregonians in watershed enhancement work.



Presentation from Hood River SWCD.



Vanport flood, 1948.

Strategy 2.1 OWEB staff held **listening and informational sessions** to inform and promote grant offerings **for Natural and Working Lands funds** that are intended to be prioritized for Environmental Justice communities and Tribes.

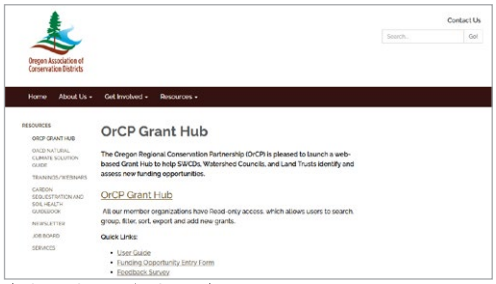
Strategy 2.1 OWEB staff participated in **trainings with an important inclusion nexus:**

- DOJ presentation at a staff meeting on Oregon sanctuary laws.
- Oregon Government Ethics Commission presentation on Oregon public meetings law.
- Presentation from Hood River SWCD on addressing needs of people working in the watershed and around the state with Spanish language services for pesticide work.
- Learning opportunity about the community of Vanport.

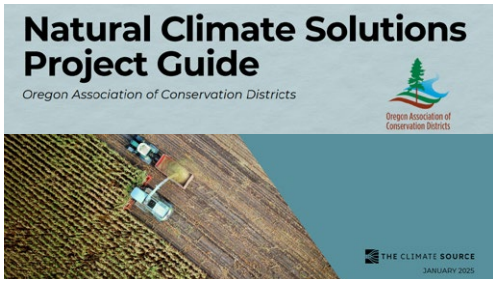
OWEB staff also attended a **networking event for diverse professionals** called "Say Hey," organized by Partners in Diversity, held at the Muslim Educational Trust in February.

Priority 3

Strengthen and leverage people and organizational capacity to achieve healthy watersheds.



The Oregon Conservation Grant Hub.



The Natural Climate Solutions Project Guide.

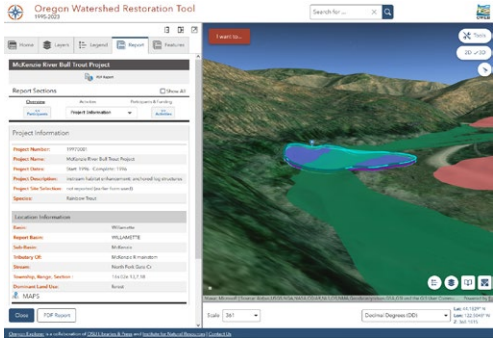
Strategy 3.2 **Oregon Conservation Partnership developed two new tools:**

- The Oregon Conservation Grant Hub, a web-based tool designed to streamline grant identification and foster collaboration for conservation efforts.
- The Natural Climate Solutions Project Guide, which helps connect landowner conservation practices with potential carbon benefits, metrics to track, and funding opportunities.

Strategy 3.1 Unawarded District Capacity funds were redistributed to 20 SWCDs to assist them in updating websites and documents to comply with ADA readability and accessibility requirements, increasing their outreach to community members.

Priority 4

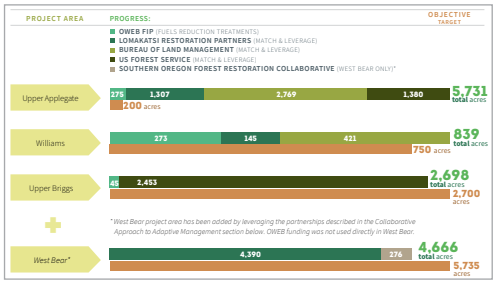
Advance learning about watershed restoration effectiveness through coordinated monitoring.



The new platform includes 3-D views.

Strategy 4.3 In February 2025, OWEB opened the annual **Oregon Watershed Restoration Inventory (OWRI) Call for Data.** OWEB also completed the annual export of OWRI restoration data to the newly updated Oregon Explorer Online platform's Oregon Watershed Restoration Tool, and the export of OWEB's investments to the Oregon Investment Tracking Tool.

Both of these OSU-hosted tools are widely used, with dozens of site visits in the past reporting period. Exporting OWRI data allows for download in several other user-friendly formats, with over 700 visits to the OWRI page on the OWEB site within the past reporting period. All of this information informs decision-making and informs policymakers about the impacts of restoration and OWEB's watershed investments.



PTRs include metrics on the completion of specific objectives.

Strategy 4.3 **Progress Tracking Reports** (PTRs) for each of the current FIP Cohort 2 and 3 partnerships were published for the January board meeting. PTRs provide a written and visual account of each partnership's progress in implementing their initiatives. PTRs are the primary tool to communicate with the board about the progress and evolution of each FIP initiative as they proceed with strategic action plan implementation, monitoring, and adaptive management of the partnership. The reports summarize each partnership's work and synthesize actions to provide a high-level portrait of progress. PTRs are published on OWEB's website, with hundreds of views within the past reporting period.

Priority 5

Increase connection of urban and working lands to watershed health.

Cover crop on dryland wheat in Wasco. (photo by NRCS)

Strategy 5.3 The **Natural and Working Lands fund engagement process** revealed strong support for the priorities outlined in the legislation, including that a diversity of landowners and land managers are able to participate in natural climate solutions and that the funds should optimize the social, health, ecological, climate resilience, or economic benefits of natural climate solutions. As a result of the engagement process, OWEB has included cover cropping, rotational grazing, and cultural burns as eligible practices, dropped match requirements from 25% to 5%, and revised the grant applications to very closely match the standard OS and OAHP applications.

Before photo of the Hall Creek Riparian Urban Restoration Small Grant project with Tualatin SWCD.

Strategy 5.3 Activities to **engage urban partners** has taken place under the Small Grant Program. Next biennium, OWEB will switch to funding the lead organizations for small grant teams and will have higher expectations for community engagement. OWEB is currently revising the offering for small grant teams.

Priority 6

Take bold and innovative action toward climate resilience.

The footprint of the Rail Ridge Fire from the John Day Basin Partnership project.

Strategy 6.1 The 2024 Wildfire Response Technical Assistance grants, totaling $2 million, were approved in October 2024 for areas affected by the wildfires. To address the urgent need for recovery support, a streamlined review process involving staff and the Executive Team was implemented. By March 2025, one application had been approved, funding the **development of a restoration prioritization framework for post-fire recovery in the John Day Basin,** which may be adapted for other regions. The funding also supports a virtual fencing pilot program aimed at enhancing virtual fencing practices across Oregon.

Strategy 6.2 Oregon Department of Energy is leading on the recruitment for the development of a **biological sequestration and storage inventory** for the state as well as a second recruitment for activity and community impact metrics. Both solicitations are in the final stages of review and will be posted soon. OWEB is part of interagency working group to provide input on the tools as they are developed, ensuring that proposed metrics are feasible for grantees.

Strategies Chart

January 2025- April 2025

accomplishments
highlighted in quarterly update

January April July October

1 Through our grantmaking, build awareness of the relationship between the people of Oregon and watershed protection and restoration

		January	April	July	October
1.1	Elevate the story of how protection and restoration promote healthy watersheds	●	●		
1.2	Connect people around watershed work	●	●		
1.3	Increase use of OWEB's engagement grant offering to support grantees doing community engagement	●			

2 Leverage our position as an anchor funder to engage the diversity of Oregonians in watershed enhancement

		January	April	July	October
2.1	Enhance OWEB presence throughout Oregon	●	●		
2.2	Increase diversity and inclusion through improving access to our programs	●			
2.3	Engage organizations, entities, and communities that have not traditionally been involved in watershed restoration work	●	●		

3 Use our funding to strengthen and leverage people and organizational capacity to achieve healthy watersheds

		January	April	July	October
3.1	Support diverse funding opportunities to sustain the capacity of partners	●	●		
3.2	Expand training for partners	●	●		

4 Advance learning about watershed restoration effectiveness through coordinated monitoring

		January	April	July	October
4.1	Facilitate learning through monitoring	●	●		
4.2	Learn, share and support efforts to integrate indigenous knowledge	●			
4.3	Communicate data-driven outcomes to guide restoration investments	●	●		

5 Increase investment connecting urban and working lands to watershed health

		January	April	July	October
5.1	Promote value of multi benefit watershed projects	●	●		
5.2	Increase investment connecting of urban and working lands to watershed health	●	●		
5.3	Support and fund grantees building or expanding partnerships with urban constituencies		●		

6 Take bold and innovative action toward funding projects that advance climate resilience

		January	April	July	October
6.1	Increase support for bold and innovative grant making in service to watershed restoration and protection	●	●		
6.2	Articulate the benefits of watershed protection and restoration for climate resiliency	●	●		

Executive Director Update C-2: Budget and Legislative Update

This report provides the board updates on the OWEB 2025-2027 budget and the 2025 legislative session.

Background

The Oregon Legislature approves budgets for state agencies on a biennial basis.

- First, each agency submits a requested budget (ARB).
- The Governor then releases a recommended budget (GRB).
- Lastly, the Oregon Legislature approves and adopts a final budget (LAB).

Agencies must specifically request changes to the base budget and justify the need for each addition. The requested changes to an agency's base budget are called Policy Option Packages (POPs).

Throughout 2024, OWEB engaged with the Governor's Office and the Department of Administrative Services in developing and refining agency POPs based on the Governor's priorities and the latest revenue forecasts for Oregon. The board approved submissions of OWEB's POPs at the July 2024 meeting, and these were included in the ARB that was submitted in August 2024. The GRB was released in December 2024. During the legislative session, agencies must support the GRB.

OWEB does not have any agency legislative concepts that would be addressed in bills separate from the agency budget. OWEB will be tracking other concepts that may affect the agency. The 2025 legislative session began on January 21, with a target ending date of June 18.

Legislative Budgeting Process

The GRB provides support for OWEB's operations and grant programs. The majority of POPs requested in the ARB are included in the GRB, and a number of important agency priorities for staffing and grant programs are also reflected. Attachment A provides a summary of what is included in the GRB.

OWEB's budget was heard by the Natural Resources Subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means on February 25-26. Day 1 was a presentation of the agency's budget by OWEB leadership, and Day 2 was reserved for public comment. Work sessions with the Natural Resources Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee may occur any time after agency budget hearings are completed.

Policy Legislation

In addition to the agency budget, staff are tracking other legislation that may affect OWEB or its partners. Over 3,300 bills have been introduced during the session thus far. OWEB does not take a position on any bills that originate outside the Executive Branch. Currently, OWEB is tracking 18 bills in the agency's top two tiers of priorities. Examples of Priority 1 bills that OWEB is tracking include (but are not limited to):

- HB 3131, which would appropriate funding to OWEB for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program.
- HB 3341, which would appropriate funding to OWEB for the Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program.

At the April board meeting, staff will update the board about any changes that have the potential to affect OWEB.

Attachments

A. OWEB 2025-2027 Governor's Recommended Budget Summary

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

2025-2027 Governor's Recommended Budget

	2023-2025 Legislatively Adopted Budget (LAB)	2025-2027 Current Service Level (CSL)	2025-2027 Governor's Budget (GRB)
Lottery Fund	$116,197,727	$119,644,452	$119,966,991
Federal Funds	$56,787,165	$36,831,423	$61,591,577
Other Funds	$45,819,445	$4,050,459	$43,533,391
General Fund	$40,770,232	--	$8,967,700
Total Funds	**$259,574,569**	**$160,526,334**	**$234,059,659**
Positions	49	33	49
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	45.91	33.00	48.50

Recommended Policy Packages - Operations Budget

100 – Acquisition and Special Program Manager: Converts limited duration management position to a permanent position to lead all land and water acquisitions and stewardship work at OWEB. Includes associated services and supplies. New funding recommended: $509,000 ($407,7000 GF/$101,300 LF).

101 – Grant Program Staffing Capacity: Adds one new permanent grant project manager (NRS-4) to support OWEB's core, landscape-scale grant making programs. Includes associated services and supplies. New funding recommended: $286,813 (LF).

102 - Land Acquisition Stewardship and Compliance: Adds one new permanent position (NRS-3) to coordinate required stewardship and compliance monitoring of investments that involve permanent interests in land. Includes associated services and supplies. Funding recommended: $0 (Self-funded through reduction in services and supplies within LF).

105 – Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) Staff Continuity: Provides continuity for 12 months for two limited duration program positions, an OAHP Coordinator (OPA-4) and OAHP Easement Specialist (NRS-4). Includes associated services and supplies. Funding recommended: $455,555 (Funded through previous OF appropriation).

106 - Water Acquisitions Staffing Continuity: Converts one limited duration Water Acquisitions/Capacity Grants Coordinator (OPA-4) position and one limited duration Administrative Specialist (AS-2) position to permanent positions to administer the water acquisitions grant program and other agency needs. Includes associated services and supplies. Funding recommended: $745,000 (Funded through previous OF appropriation).

107 – Environmental Restoration Council (ERC) Staffing Continuity: Provides continuity for two limited duration positions, ERC Coordinator (OPA-4) for 12 months and ERC Grant Program Specialist (NRS -4) for 24 months, to develop and administer activities associated with the ERC. Includes associated services and supplies. Funding recommended: $560,000 (Funded through previous OF appropriation).

108 – ERC Staffing Capacity: Adds three positions to develop and administer activities associated with the ERC, limited duration ERC Grant Program Specialist (NRS-4), limited duration ERC Information Systems Specialist (ISS-4), and permanent ERC Accounting Technician. Includes associated services and supplies. Funding recommended: $750,000 (Funded through previous OF appropriation).

109 – National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Compliance Staffing Continuity: Provides continuity, and makes permanent, a Cultural Resources Specialist (NRS-4) position to assure compliance with NHPA requirements associated with Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery funding. Includes associated services and supplies. Funding recommended: $351,000 (FF).

110 – Federal Programs Staffing Continuity: Provides continuity for one limited duration Federal Program Specialist (NRS-4) position to administer federal funds from the Bureau of Land Management and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Includes associated services and supplies. Funding recommended: $380,000 (FF).

111 - Core Information Technology Staffing Realignment: Provides funding limitation to reclassify two permanent positions to serve internal program needs and improve customer service. Funding recommended: $29,154 (FF).

Additional DAS CFO Analyst Adjustments Operations Budget – Package 090

- **OAHP Staffing Continuity:** Building off POP 105, provides an additional 12 months of funding for two limited duration program positions, an OAHP Coordinator (OPA-4) and OAHP Easement Specialist (NRS-4). Includes associated services and supplies. New funding recommended: $565,000 (GF).
- **Drinking Water Source Protection Staffing Continuity:** Provides continuity for one limited duration Drinking Water Source Protection Coordinator (NRS-4) position to administer the grant program. Includes associated services and supplies. New funding recommended: $570,000 (GF).
- **Natural and Working Lands – Climate Resiliency Staffing Continuity:** Provides continuity for one limited duration Climate Coordinator (OPA 4) position to administer natural and working lands funds allocated to OWEB at the direction of the Oregon Climate Action Commission. Includes associated services and supplies. New funding recommended: $425,000 (GF).

Statewide Attorney General Adjustment - Operations Budget – Package 092

- **Statewide AG Adjustment:** This package reduces Attorney General rates to all state agencies. Reductions in funding of $39,897 (LF & OF)

Statewide Adjustment to DAS Charges - Operations Budget – Package 093

- **Statewide Adjustment DAS Charges:** This package reduces the Statewide Government Service Charges and DAS pricelist charges for services. Reduction in funding of $40,515 (LF)

Recommended Policy Packages - Grants Budget

200/201 - Standard Grant Program Continuity: This package allows OWEB to spend non-lottery fund grants that have been awarded and continue to be active (FF $24 million, OF $37 million) as carry-forward.

Additional DAS CFO Analyst Adjustments Grants Budget – Package 090

- **Additional Grant Programs Funding:** This package includes a one-time appropriation of $5 million to the Natural and Working Lands Fund to be allocated at the direction of the Oregon Climate Action Commission and a one-time appropriation of $2 million to the Agricultural Heritage Fund. New funding recommended: $7 million (GF).

Fund Source Key:	LF = Lottery Funds	FF = Federal Funds	GF = General Funds	OF = Other Funds

Agency Staffing:	
2025- 2027 Current Service Level	33.0 FTE (permanent positions/FTE)
2025-2027 Governor's Recommended Budget additions	15.5 FTE (7 permanent FTE, 8.5 limited duration FTE)
2025-2027 Governor's Recommended Budget total	48.5 FTE (40 permanent, 8.5 limited duration)

Executive Director Update C-3: OWEB Rulemaking Update

This report provides the board updates on upcoming OWEB rulemaking efforts.

Background

Grant programs at OWEB are guided by administrative rules. Rules cover topics, such as project eligibility, application requirements, evaluation criteria, technical review processes, and funding decisions for OWEB grant programs/types.

OWEB regularly conducts rulemaking to update existing rules and establish rules for new programs. Generally, rulemaking takes 12 months from board initiation to rule adoption. During those 12 months, OWEB staff recruit a Rulemaking Advisory Committee (RAC) through a process consistent with Oregon Administrative Procedures law (ORS 183.333) that requires the committee to be made up of entities most likely to be impacted by the rules, develop draft rule language, hold several RAC meetings to discuss rule language, and provide formal tribal and public notification to receive comments on draft rules. The schedule may be abbreviated in instances where a RAC is not involved in rulemaking.

The process begins when staff requests the board initiate rulemaking in an OWEB rules division. At that time, staff will provide a high-level overview of what is intended to be accomplished with rulemaking and describe the draft schedule. For rulemaking efforts that involve a RAC, staff will provide the board, at a second board meeting, a progress update on key emerging themes of the draft rules. At a third board meeting, staff will bring a final draft set of rules for board consideration for adoption.

Rulemaking Schedule

The following table describes the tentative schedule for current and future OWEB rulemaking. It does not include rulemaking associated with the new Oregon Environmental Restoration Council established in SB 1561 (2024), but it is assumed that OWEB staff will also be involved in the development of rules for those programs in 2025. The timeframes in the table below may be adjusted due to workload.

Administrative Rules	**Board Initiate Rulemaking**	**Board Consideration for Adoption - Proposed**
Water Acquisition Grants (Division 46)	July 2025	July 2026

April 22-23, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

Executive Director Update C-4: 2024 Immediate Wildfire Response Technical Assistance (TA) Program Update

This report provides the board updates on the 2024 Immediate Wildfire Response TA Program.

Background

The 2024 wildfire season impacted approximately 1.9 million acres throughout 21 counties in Oregon. Of this, approximately 721,000 acres are on private, state, local, and tribal lands. The post-fire impacts are widespread and pose great risk to the health of Oregon watersheds. In October 2024, the OWEB Board approved up to $2 million in funding to support technical assistance grants to address needs in the 2024 wildfire areas.

These non-competitive grants are supported by state lottery dollars and support technical assistance and engagement activities including post-fire recovery assessments, cultural resource assessments, and landowner and partner engagement. Funding prioritizes non-federal lands and requires grantees to work in coordination with other local partners including Tribes and non-traditional partners that operate in the fire areas. A sliding scale of funding is available based on the number of non-federal acres impacted and there is a single funding allocation per fire area. Given the geographic scale of the 2024 wildfires, applicants may apply for more than one fire in a single application but must demonstrate coordination with appropriate partners, including Tribes and non-traditional partners operating within the wildfire areas.

Status Update

Since the board's approval of funding, OWEB staff developed the application and program materials, including a program webpage and program guidance to provide information to prospective applicants. The offering opened on December 18, 2024, and applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until May 29, 2025. The end date for the grants is January 31, 2027.

As of March 2025, one application has been submitted, reviewed, and recommended for funding based on the streamlined review process developed by staff. The submitted application is on behalf of the John Day Basin Partnership and requests $599,725 for resource assessment and engagement activities in six wildfire areas: Battle Mountain Complex, Courtrock, Fossil Complex, Lone Rock, Rail Ridge, and Shoe Fly. Local partners are working in close collaboration to develop a GIS framework for restoration actions and prioritization. This work also includes engagement to pilot a virtual fencing program within the Upper Rock Creek Watershed. The grant agreement has been fully executed. Project activities are expected to continue through November 2026.

Five additional applications are in the system for possible submission. If submitted, funding would provide technical assistance for 1) Copperfield Fire, 2) Larch Creek Fire, 3) Falls, Telephone, and Porcupine Fires, 4) Durkee and Cow Valley Fires, and 5) Crazy Creek Fire. As some applicants also applied through Open Solicitation for post-fire recovery assistance, OWEB staff remain in coordination between programs to ensure applications are not duplicative.

April 22-23, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

Executive Director Update C-5: Klamath River Post-Dam Removal Watershed Restoration Update

This report provides the board with an update on the status of OWEB's investment in Klamath River Post-Dam Removal Watershed Restoration costs associated with work by the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRC).

Background

PacifiCorp previously owned four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River, three in California and one in Oregon (J.C. Boyle dam). PacifiCorp and the Oregon Public Utilities Commission determined that it is in the best interest of the company and its customers to stop operating the dams rather than spending substantial amounts of money on improvements needed to continue generating power. KRRC is a private, independent nonprofit organization formed by signatories of the amended Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement (KHSA). Signatories of the amended KHSA – including the States of Oregon and California, local governments, Tribal nations, PacifiCorp, irrigators, and several conservation and fishing groups – appointed KRRC to take ownership and oversee the removal of the four Klamath River dams. Funding was committed in the amount of $450 million for removal and watershed restoration.

The Reservoir Area Management Plan submitted by KRRC to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) describes measures for restoration, monitoring, and adaptive management of the former reservoir areas exposed following dam removal, upland sites, and high-priority tributaries, including actions specifically planned for the former reservoir area upstream of J.C. Boyle dam. The federal review process resulted in the need for the states and PacifiCorp to provide up to $45 million in additional financial support for the project, divided equally among the three entities, to address contingencies. On October 26, 2022, the OWEB Board committed $15 million over a period of 3-5 years for Klamath River post-dam removal watershed restoration costs incurred by KRRC.

OWEB is using both state and federal funding sources for this grant commitment. The initial grant award, made and delegated by the board in October 2022, was $4.053 million. An additional $8 million was committed and delegated by the board in the 2023-2025 spending plan at the July 2023 board meeting. The remaining $2.947 million was allocated as part of the OWEB 2023-2025 spending plan rebalance at the July 2024 board meeting. In late 2022, OWEB and KRRC finalized a partnership agreement that affirms the intent of OWEB's investment in Klamath River post-dam removal watershed restoration and describes the framework, scope, tasks, and timeline for the overarching $15 million in funding. KRRC, working with RES (KRRC's restoration contractor), submitted a grant application to OWEB on May 30, 2024. OWEB executed a grant agreement on September 30, 2024. The scope of this grant mirrors restoration actions for the J.C. Boyle area as outlined in the Reservoir Area Management Plan and minor additional requirements included in FERC's final order.

Status Update

KRRC has been reimbursed $14.8 million of the allocated $15 million.

Recent progress related to the broader Klamath Dam removal project:

- Dam removal activities are complete. Kiewit, KRRC's contractor, completed its work and demobilized from the site in November 2024. The project has now turned its focus to restoration, which will be ongoing for several years and will begin to shift from active restoration implementation activities in 2025 to monitoring adaptive management approaches

through the License Surrender Order (LSO) term. The LSO will be in effect until all terms and conditions of the Order are met. This is likely through 2029 or 2030.

- Restoration implementation for Spencer Creek is now complete. Large wood features, in the form of whole trees, were placed in and along Spencer Creek in August 2024. When large wood was placed, juvenile salmonids (likely redband trout) were observed immediately using that wood for cover habitat. In October and November 2024, over 150 adult chinook salmon were observed in the restoration reach, both moving through the reach to upstream spawning habitat and actively spawning in and around the large wood placed in the restoration reach. Spencer Creek experienced a number of precipitation-driven high flow events November 2024 – February 2025. Stream condition monitoring that followed those events has shown that Spencer Creek is not eroding or degrading, pointing to a high-quality stream channel and floodplain configuration that will continue to support a highly functioning riverine ecosystem with only limited additional restoration activities such as riparian vegetation enhancement. This determination was made following coordination with the Habitat Restoration Group, which includes Tribal and state and federal agency representatives and concurrence by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

- Restoration activities, including tree and shrub planting, in the J.C. Boyle area have been on hold since December 2024 due to temperatures and weather conditions, which has resulted in snow cover throughout the winter. KRRC anticipates these conditions will support the ongoing establishment of the plantings and restoration work in the area as snow melts, providing a slow-release source of soil moisture that infiltrates down into the soil, and providing water for plants as seeds germinate in the spring. As weather and site access conditions allow, crews will plant 10,000-15,000 shrubs and/or trees in the J.C. Boyle area this spring.

- Invasive Exotic Vegetation (IEV) monitoring and treatment will occur throughout the spring and summer months, following coordination with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the US Bureau of Land Management, which are also planning weed treatment activities in the area this year.

- Restoration work will begin to move into the adaptive management stage, during which RES will monitor establishment of the plantings and seedings in the key restoration sites; at the J.C. Boyle area, monitoring will focus on the reservoir footprint, previous power canal and scour hole areas, and the Spencer Creek confluence area. Based on monitoring results, RES will evaluate if and/or how additional seedings, plantings, IEV treatments, or construction activities may be required to ensure the ongoing restoration success.

Quarterly reports will be provided to the board at each meeting.

April 22-23, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

Executive Director Update C-6: Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative Update

This report provides the board updates on the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative.

Background

In 2023, the state of Oregon and Washington and the Yakama, Nez Perce, Umatilla and Warm Springs Tribes (the "Six Sovereigns) developed the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative as a science-based strategy to restore salmon to healthy and abundant levels, support local and regional economic and climate resilience, restore ecosystem function and honor longstanding and unmet commitments to Tribal Nations. In September 2024 Governor Kotek signed EO-24-28 requiring the named state agencies, which included OWEB, to take actions necessary to support Oregon's commitments to the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative and the Resilient Columbia Basin Agreement and report annually to the Governor's Office and the OWEB Board on the agency's implementation.

Status Update

OWEB is not specifically identified in any Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative (CBRI) proposal submitted by the Six Sovereigns or in the program commitments document. However, OWEB administers a variety of grant programs that can provide direct and indirect support to many of the program commitments by helping partners remove barriers to fish passage, restore habitat and stream flows, and enhance resiliency to climate change. The attached report was provided to the Governor's office in February and provides additional details on OWEB's programs that support the CBRI.

Attachments

A. OWEB CBRI Report 2025

Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
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Overview

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) is a state agency that administers grants for watershed restoration, fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, farm and ranchland protection, and natural and working lands.

In 2023, the state of Oregon and Washington and the Yakama, Nez Perce, Umatilla and Warm Springs Tribes (the "Six Sovereigns) developed the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative as a science-based strategy to restore salmon to healthy and abundant levels, support local and regional economic and climate resilience, restoration ecosystem function and honor longstanding and unmet commitments to Tribal Nations. In September 2024 Governor Kotek signed EO-24-28 requiring the named state agencies, which included OWEB, to take actions necessary to support Oregon's commitments to the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative and the Resilient Columbia Basin Agreement. This report provides OWEB's updates under EO-24-28.

1. **Identify and describe all program commitments that identify the Agency, and any program commitments that are within the Agency's direct or indirect areas of expertise.**

OWEB is not specifically identified in any Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative (CBRI) program commitments. However, OWEB administers a variety of grant programs that can provide direct and indirect support to the program commitments. OWEB's grant programs fund activities, leading to resilient ecosystems, fish and wildlife populations, working landscapes, and communities.

OWEB's grantmaking strategically integrates priorities identified by other state and federal agencies including federal recovery plans, state conservation or tribal plans, and water quality plans. Grant types include restoration, land and water acquisition, technical design, technical planning, monitoring and engagement. OWEB's newest grant program offers Tribal Project Development grants.

OWEB grant programs can support many of the program commitments by helping partners remove barriers to fish passage, restore habitat and stream flows, and enhance resiliency to climate change. Specific program commitments identified in the MOU between the federal government and the Six Sovereigns that OWEB programs already support or can support in the future include:

- Mid-Columbia Restoration Plan (Objective 1(a))
- Cold Water Refuge Projects (Objective 1(a))
- Native Fish and Shellfish (Objective 1(a) and 2)
- Improved Ecosystem Function Commitments (Objective 1(a))
- Ocean and Estuary Actions (Objective 1(a))
- Increased Funding in Support of Basin-Wide Restoration (Objective 1(a))

2. **Describe the agency's existing statutory and administrative authority and programs to implement program commitments identified in subsection i;**

OWEB administers Lottery Fund, Federal Fund, General Fund and Other Fund through its various grant programs. Grant programs support voluntary conservation activities across the state. Partners include hundreds of local stewardship organizations including watershed councils, soil and water conservation districts, land trusts and other non-governmental organizations; landowners; tribal governments; cities and counties; and schools and universities. OWEB also works closely with state and federal agencies to support integrated, enterprise-level natural resource priorities. Projects support watershed restoration and resilience, water quality improvements, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, farm and ranchland protection, natural climate solutions, and drinking water source protection.

OWEB's statutory authorities include broad, grantmaking authority focused on watershed health, conservation, protection, and recovery of fish and wildlife species and their habitats. Some of OWEB's authorities relate specifically to Constitutionally-directed lottery dollars for grants for watershed restoration, but as noted above, the agency now administers a variety of funding sources and has the authorities needed to operate these funding sources and programs.

Below are just some of OWEB's grant programs. All of the grant programs listed below directly support the CBRI Program Commitments described in subsection i. Additionally, a variety of other OWEB programs provide direct or indirect benefits to native fish and contribute to CBRI objectives. Evaluation criteria for all grants are set in rule and are referenced below.

Grant Programs (ORS 541.947, 541.956, and ORS 541.932 and 541.960 for Land and Water Acquisition)

- Water acquisition grants (OAR 695-046): Eligible projects involve the purchase of an interest in water from a willing seller for the purpose of increasing instream flow for habitat and species conservation benefits and improving water quality. These projects are funded with Oregon Lottery, federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, and General Funds.
- Land acquisition grants (OAR 695-045): Eligible projects involve the purchase of interests in land from willing sellers for the purpose of maintaining or restoring watersheds and habitat for native fish or wildlife. These projects are funded with Oregon Lottery Funds.
- Open Solicitation grant program is a responsive grant program based on local, state, federal, tribal, and regional planning processes. Grants are typically offered twice a year through a competitive process. These projects are funded with Oregon Lottery, Salmon License Plate and Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds.
    - *Technical Assistance grants (695-030)*: support technical assistance projects necessary for restoration or acquisition projects and include technical design, engineering, resource assessment and planning.
    - *Restoration grants (695-010)*: support watershed projects that restore watershed functions.
    - *Monitoring grants (695-025):* support monitoring projects that work to address current watershed conditions, identify trends, determine project effectiveness, and information future restoration and acquisition actions.
    - *Engagement grants (695-015):* support outreach efforts necessary for carrying out eligible restoration and acquisition projects.
- Focused Investment Partnership Program (695-047) supports high-performing partnerships in pursuing conservation initiatives guided by existing strategic action plans. The OWEB Board has

approved 7 board adopted priorities for this program. The work under the CBRI falls under the Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species priority and under the Coastal Estuary priority.

- Tribal Project Development grants (695-030). These funds will be available to support Oregon nine federally recognized tribes and the Nez Perce to participate in salmon recovery efforts in Oregon. These are non-competitive grants with $100,000 allocated to each tribe. These projects are funded with Oregon Lottery, and Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds.
- Partnership Technical Assistance grants (695-030): support existing partnerships to generate a new or enhance an existing strategic action plan, elevate the partnership's current level of performance and support partnership capacity.

3. **Describe any gaps in statutory or administrative (rule) authority that would be necessary to accelerate full and effective program implementation*;***

None have been identified.

4. Identify opportunities within existing programs and authorities to accelerate effective program implementation; and

Three OWEB programs, Focused Investment Partnerships, Open Solicitation, and Water Acquisitions, present opportunities to local partners or coalitions of local partners to plan and implement projects at multiple scales that support the program commitments in the MOU.

OWEB's Focused Investment Partnership Program (FIP) supports high-performing partnerships in pursuing conservation initiatives guided by existing strategic action plans. The program provides long-term funding for seven board-adopted ecological priorities, two of which have significant connections to the CBRI. The Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species priority supports the program commitments identified in the MOU between the federal government and the six sovereigns. :

- Mid-Columbia Restoration Plan (Objective 1(a))
- Cold Water Refuge Projects (Objective 1(a))
- Native Fish and Shellfish (Objective 1(a) and 2)
- Improved Ecosystem Function Commitments (Objective 1(a))
- Ocean and Estuary Actions (Objective 1(a))
- Increased Funding in Support of Basin-Wide Restoration (Objective 1(a))

The Coastal Estuaries priority supports Ocean and Estuary Actions under Objective 1(a).

FIP Program Implementation funding supports partnerships with up to $12 million over 3 biennia. Partnerships applying for FIP Implementation funding must have a strategic action plan that defines the geographic extent, timeframe, and range of strategies and actions that will lead to the long-term goals of a partnership. Once funded implementation funding supports Partnership Capacity, Engagement, Monitoring, Technical Assistance, Restoration, and Land and Water Acquisition. An Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish or a Coastal Estuaries FIP focused on CBRI program objectives could accelerate program implementation. OWEB's next solicitation for Implementation FIPs is scheduled for 2026-2027.

Within OWEB's currently funded FIPs the John Day Basin Partnership is working on the John Day Basin Native Fish Habitat Initiative. This initiative brings together partners throughout the basin with a common interest in restoring watersheds to enhance native fish populations, while at the same time maintaining healthy working landscapes and thriving local communities. The work of the partnership directly supports the CBRI program objectives.

OWEB's Open Solicitation grant program is a responsive grant program based on local, state, federal, tribal, and regional planning processes. Grants are typically offered twice a year through a competitive process and reviewed by regional review teams located around the state. Grant applications submitted in support of CBRI program objectives to this program would likely be evaluated favorably.

OWEB's Water Acquisition grant program is a responsive grant program that supports streamflow restoration. Applicants can develop time-limited projects such as instream leases or temporary transfers, as well as permanent instream transfers. In 2022, OWEB received a $10 million legislative allocation to provide additional long-term funding for this program. Due to the complex nature of the transactions in this program, and the limited number of partners in the state with expertise in water transactions, applications to this program during its lifetime have been limited. The legislative investment in this program offers an opportunity to grow grant investments in streamflow restoration over the long term.

5. **Identify any resources the Agency currently has to implement the *CBRI* and RBCA and all resources and funding the Agency does not currently have but would need to accelerate effective *CBRI* and RBCA implementation.**

OWEB's resources include staff as well as granting resources. The agency has 49 budgeted positions in its 23-25 budget, 12 of which are fully or partially federally funded. All of these positions exist to support OWEB's grantmaking and range from project-management to fiscal to reporting staff to administrative.

OWEB generally uses Lottery and Federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF) to fund Open Solicitation and Focused Investment Partnership grant programs. OWEB is anticipating $107.8 million of Lottery Funds available for grants in the 2025-2027 biennium (based on June 2024 lottery revenue forecast). OWEB applies annually to the PCSRF program. OWEB received its largest award to date in FFY24, with $13 available for grants. The PCSRF program is anticipating less funding available for it FFY25 and FFY26 funding opportunities, which may impact the number of projects OWEB can fund.

OREGON
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Agenda Item D

General Board Business

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

MINUTES ARE NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)
January 28-29, 2025, Board Meeting

Virtual Board Meeting
Recording at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOwLt4Sp--i1KEa_OA

OWEB MEMBERS PRESENT	OWEB STAFF PRESENT	OTHERS
Agpaoa, Elizabeth	Bettinardi, Nicole	Abele, Meagan
Boyer, Barbara	Davis, Renee	Burruss, Mizu
Brown, Dan	DeBardelaben, Theresa	Buttafuoco, Joe
Buckmaster, Bruce	Fetcho, Ken	Cornelius, Lindsay
Coates, Kelly	Forney, Miriam	Doulos, Hilary
Curtis, Aaron	Hartstein, Eric	Ferrell, Justin
Hoeflich, Russ	Hatch, Audrey	Hayduk, Evan
Kershner, Jessi	Hoffert, Denise	Horton, Cheryl
Labhart, Mark	Larson, Taylor	Humphreys, Jessica
McAlister, Liza Jane	McCarthy, Jillian	Kendrick, Karsyn
McClary, Lindsay	Maness, Nicole	Kreiner, Andrea
McLeod-Skinner, Jamie	Meacher, Robin	La Bonte, Lucie
Murray, Eric	O'Brien, Sara	LeClear, Nathan
Tachella, Claire	Page, Stephanie	Lee, Jan
Webb, Mark	Scharer, Miriam	Lutz, Haley
Wolfe, Woody	Shaff, Courtney	McAdams, Nellie
	Williams, Eric	Moffett, Tim
		Myers, Renee
		Oakes, Max
		Olsker, Whitney
		Peters, Sara Evans
		Riggsby, Terri Preeg
		Shepard, Kat
		Simanonok, Stacy
		Stephens, Jaime
		Stiner, Amy
		Strahan, Rob
		Walz, Kristen

Tuesday, January 28

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Kelly Coates: Recording

A. Board Member Comments (Timestamp = 00:03:58)

Board representatives from state and federal agencies provided updates on issues related to the natural resource agency they represent. Public and tribal board members also reported on their recent activities, shared information, and commented on various watershed enhancement and community conservation-related topics. *Information item*.

B. Review and Approval of Minutes (Timestamp = 01:10:06)
The minutes of the October 22-23, 2024, meeting was presented for board approval. *Action item*.

Mark Labhart moved the board approve the minutes from the October 22-23, 2024, board meeting. Motion was seconded by Lindsay McClary. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, and Mark Webb voted yes. Woody Wolfe abstained. Motion passed.

C. Public Comment (Timestamp = 01:11:07)
This time was reserved for the board to hear public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. The written public comments submitted for this meeting are posted on our website. The following people provided verbal comments. *Information item*.

- Chris Gannon, Crooked River Watershed Council
- Andrea Kreiner, Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
- Joe Buttafuoco, Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts
- Terri Preeg Riggsby, Network of Oregon Watershed Councils
- Amy Stiner, South Fork John Day Watershed Council
- Jan Lee, Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
- Justin Ferrell, Lake County SWCD

D. Directors Updates (Timestamp = 01:50:50)
Executive Director Sara O'Brien and staff updated the board on agency business. *Information item.*

E. Spending Plan Discussion (Timestamp = 02:23:00)
Executive Director Sara O'Brien elicited feedback from the board regarding priorities for the 2025-2027 spending plan. *Information item.*

F. Lostine Collaborative Telling the Restoration Story (Timestamp = 04:30:40)
Conservation Outcomes Coordinator Audrey Hatch and Jessica Humphreys of Trout Unlimited updated the board on the coordinated monitoring efforts taking place at the Lostine River basin in Wallowa County. *Information item.*

G. Request Telling Restoration Story Funds (Timestamp = 05:12:30)
Conservation Outcomes Coordinator Audrey Hatch and Monitoring and Effectiveness Monitoring Coordinator and Tribal Liaison Ken Fetcho requested funding allocation in support of Telling the Restoration Story grants. *Action item*.

Lindsay McClary moved the board allocate up to $250,000 in support of Telling the Restoration Story grants with funds from the Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes line item of the 2023—2025 spending plan, and delegate to the Executive Director the authority to distribute the funds through appropriate agreements with an award date of January 28, 2025. Motion was seconded by Jamie McLeod-Skinner. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.

H. 2024 Tribal Report (Timestamp = 05:34:52)
Tribal Liaison Ken Fetcho presented the agency's 2024 Annual Tribal Report. *Information item.*

I. Committee Updates (Timestamp = 06:09:47)
Representatives from board committees provided updates on committee topics to the full board. *Information item*.

J. Committee Structure Discussion (Timestamp = 06:15:13)
Executive Director Sara O'Brien described the board's current committee structure and requested feedback and action from the board on future committee structure options. Item was discussed on Tuesday (Timestamp = 06:15:13) and the motion occurred on Wednesday (Timestamp = 02:56:00). *Action item.*

Jamie McLeod-Skinner moved the board replace the current committee structure with standing committees focused on key areas of OWEB grant funding and work: 1) restoration, acquisitions, and emerging issues; 2) partnerships and capacity to serve all Oregonians; and 3) tracking and communicating results, mission, and value. It is the board's specific intention that committee 3 include reporting and oversight of implementation on board-adopted policies and resolutions. Motion seconded by Liz Agpaoa. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, and Woody Wolfe voted yes. Mark Webb opposed. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m. by co-chair Kelly Coates.

Wednesday January 29

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Barbara Boyer: Recording

K. Public Comment (Timestamp = 00:01:38)
This time was reserved for the board to hear public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. The written public comments submitted for this meeting are posted on our website. The following people provided verbal comments. *Information item*.

- Chris Gannon, Crooked River Watershed Council
- Karsyn Kendrick, Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts
- Kristen Walz, North Fork John Day Watershed Council
- Nellie McAdams, Oregon Agricultural Trust

L. Land Acquisition Update (Timestamp = 00:18:12)
Land Acquisitions Coordinator Miriam Forney and Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager Renee Davis updated the board about a proposed change to the conservation easement for the Willamette Confluence Project grant (Grant No. 208-3090-8358), in preparation for board consideration of the request at the April 2025 meeting, and discussed other recent developments in the Land Acquisition grant program. *Information Item.*

M. Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program 2024 Grant Awards (Timestamp = 01:08:57)
Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) Coordinator Taylor Larson, Conservation Easement Specialist Robin Meacher, and Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager Renee

Davis provided an overview of the 2024 OAHP conservation easement grant offering and funding recommendations. *Action Item.*

Lindsay McClary moved the board award OAHP Conservation Easement grants in the amount of $5,081,036 with an award date of January 29, 2025, as shown in Attachment A as recommended by the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission, with the standard required conditions detailed in Attachment D. Motion seconded by Russ Hoeflich. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted yes. Bruce Buckmaster and Mark Labhart abstained. Motion passed.

N. Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (OAHC) Appointments (Timestamp = 02:03:46)
Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program Coordinator Taylor Larson and Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager Renee Davis provided an overview of the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission, the nomination process for the three vacant seats, and presentation of the nominated candidates, and requested the OWEB Board appoint candidates to fill the vacancies. *Action item.*

Jamie McLeod-Skinner moved the board appoint Mark Vargas, Jan Lee, and John O'Keefe to the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission for an initial term ending January 1, 2029. Motion seconded by Barbara Boyer. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.

O. Rule Revisions: Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (Timestamp = 02:22:58)
Senior Policy Coordinator Eric Hartstein, Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) Coordinator Taylor Larson, and Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager Renee Davis provided an overview of proposed revisions to OWEB's OAHP administrative rules and requested board approval of the revised rules. *Action Item.*

Mark Labhart moved the board adopt the proposed revisions to OWEB's Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program administrative rules (Chapter 638) found in Attachment E-2, effective upon filing with the Secretary of State's Office. Motion seconded by Mark Webb. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.

P. Rule Revisions: Engagement Grants and Monitoring Grants (Timestamp = 02:49:30)
Senior Policy Coordinator Eric Hartstein, Restoration Grants Manager Eric Williams, and Monitoring and Reporting Manager Courtney Shaff provided an overview of proposed revisions to OWEB's Engagement Grants and Monitoring Grants administrative rules and requested board approval of the revised rules. *Action Item.*

Lindsay McClary moved the board adopt the proposed technical changes to the administrative rules in OWEB's Engagement Grants (Division 15) and Monitoring Grants (Division 25) found in Attachment A-2, effective upon filing with the Secretary of State's Office. Motion seconded by Bruce Buckmaster. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich,

Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Q. Focused Investment Partnerships – Cohort 3 Reports (Timestamp = 04:14:42)
Senior Policy Coordinator Eric Hartstein, Partnerships Coordinator Denise Hoffert, Partnerships Coordinator Jillian McCarthy, Conservation Outcomes Coordinator Audrey Hatch, and Restoration Grants Manager Eric Williams introduced Progress Tracking Reports for each of the FIP Cohort 2 and 3 partnerships and partners from Cohort 3 presented on their initiative progress. *Information Item.*

Presentation order:

- Coos Basin Coho Partnership
- East Cascades Oak Partnership
- Klamath Siskiyou Oak Partnership
- Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative
- Siuslaw Coho Partnership

R. Rule Revisions: Focused Investment Partnership (Timestamp = 06:34:30)
Senior Policy Coordinator Eric Hartstein, Partnerships Coordinator Denise Hoffert, Partnerships Coordinator Jillian McCarthy, and Restoration Grants Manager Eric Williams provided an overview of proposed revisions to OWEB's Focused Investment Partnership administrative rules and requested board approval of the revised rules. *Action Item.*

Mark Labhart moved the board adopt the revisions to OWEB's Focused Investment Partnership Grants (Division 47) administrative rules found in Attachment B-2, effective upon filing with the Secretary of State's Office. Motion was seconded by Lindsay McClary. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.

S. Other Business (Timestamp = 07:21:08)
This item was reserved for other matters that came before the board. The board discussed possible additional funding from NRCS for cultural resources activities that may become available to OWEB before the next board meeting. *Action Item.*

Kelly Coates moved the board proactively approve receipt of up to $1 million additional funding from the NRCS for cultural resources activities on Farm Bill projects and delegate authority to the Executive Director to distribute funds through the appropriate agreements with an effective date of January 29, 2025. Motion was seconded by Mark Webb. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:12 p.m. by co-chair Barbara Boyer.

General Board Business D-2 – OAHP Conservation Easement Grant Extensions

This report provides the board updates on the progress and timeline extension needs for two Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) 2023 Conservation Easement Grants.

Background

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

Both Aspen Valley Ranch – Rim Tract and Pitchfork T were awarded grants in 2023 and required, per the administrative rules in effect at that time, to complete their transactions within 18 months of their board award[2]. At the June 2024 Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission meeting, staff presented the commission with a recommendation to extend all 2023 OAHP conservation easement grant awards by nine months to help with coordinated review and timelines with federal match partners. The commission agreed and forwarded it on to the OWEB Board, which approved the commission's recommendation. This action 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. The commission recommended proceeding with the staff recommendation to extend the project deadlines at its February 2025 meeting.

OAHP Conservation Easement Grant Extension Requests

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 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 of due diligence items.

[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.

Staff Recommendation

Staff 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.

General Board Business D-3: Quantifying Outcomes Funding Request

This report is requesting that the board approve funding from the Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes line item of the spending plan for Stage 0 (Valley Reset) Restoration Effectiveness Monitoring in Meadow Creek.

Background

There has been increased interest in restoration approaches that create complex river channels and floodplains. One approach for wide valleys is referred to as Stage 0 or valley reset restoration, which restores stream processes at the valley scale. The intent of this approach is to restore stream processes that encourage and maintain natural habitat development over time rather than engineering the habitat. For more information on Stage 0 and the benefits of restoring to this condition please visit the Stage Zero Information Hub.

The purpose of restoring stream sections, or reaches, to a Stage 0 condition is to reconnect rivers and floodplains, and resetting on a valley-scale improves the resilience and sustainability of ecosystem services. Several restoration efforts following this approach have recently taken place in western and central Oregon, including several large-scale, multi-phased restoration projects in Whychus Creek and the South Fork McKenzie River sub-basins that have been supported with OWEB funding.

Beginning in 2019 and continuing into the 2023-2025 biennium, the board has made a deliberate investment in monitoring and information sharing associated with restoring a stream channel to a Stage 0 condition. Multiple grant awards have been made to support effectiveness monitoring in the South Fork McKenzie River and in Whychus Creek. These projects are well underway and progressing as proposed. To date, restoration and effectiveness monitoring has been predominantly focused in low-elevation wet-forest environments and on reach and/or project-scale responses, leaving uncertainty about the applicability and efficacy of this approach in high-elevation dry-forest environments. Further, monitoring efforts have primarily focused on vegetation and physical habitat responses, leaving an important information gap regarding fish responses to this type of restoration.

Meadow Creek Effectiveness Monitoring Funding Request

OWEB staff are requesting funds to support pre-restoration monitoring at Meadow Creek from 2025-2027, which complements and builds on previous OWEB stage-0 monitoring investments. This funding will support a broader monitoring and restoration effort developed by the U.S. Forest Service and local partners. Funds will be directly applied to two categories: electrofishing fish sampling efforts in the spring and fall as well as macroinvertebrate sampling mid-summer, and the processing of macroinvertebrate samples. Additional details on the planned monitoring can be found in Attachment A, Meadow Creek Effectiveness Monitoring Proposal.

In 2023, the US Forest Service and local partners began to work together to co-develop a watershed-scale process-based restoration effort in the Meadow Creek watershed located in Northeast Oregon. Meadow Creek is a tributary to the Upper Grande Ronde River which has been a focus of many partners to restore aquatic habitat for native fish. This restoration planning effort – which consists of implementors, managers, and scientists from 17 different organizations – known as the Meadow Creek Collaborative, is working to develop a whole-watershed restoration plan that incorporates historical information, baseline data, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge

to identify restoration needs in upland, riparian and valley-floor settings within the Meadow Creek watershed.

This funding request provides an opportunity to quantify the fish response in a new geographic area that complements an ongoing Stage 0 restoration effectiveness monitoring investment by the board. This monitoring effort will collect data to better understand how steelhead and macroinvertebrates respond to large scale valley reset restoration actions. The entire project encompasses multiple reaches with a total restored river length of 38 kilometers, spanning federal, tribal, and private land ownerships. The convergence of restoration implementation and monitoring represents a rare opportunity to assess biological responses to floodplain reconnection. Additionally, this work will provide information to help understand ecosystem response to large scale floodplain restoration as it relates to the sustainable production of tribal first foods.

Next Steps

If funded by the board, staff would work with the applicant, the Grande Ronde Model Watershed, to submit an application and convene a technical review team to review the proposal. The funding would support pre-restoration monitoring over the next few years. The planned restoration actions are scheduled for implementation between 2028-2031 and are a priority for Forest Service staff, however, partners recognize there could be delays in implemention given the current federal funding uncertainty. It is anticipated that the board will receive an additional funding request to support post-restoration monitoring in the future to fully leverage this unique monitoring opportunity of largescale floodplain restoration efforts.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the board award up to $300,000 for effectiveness monitoring of large-scale floodplain restoration efforts in Meadow Creek with funds from the Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes line item of the OWEB spending plan, and delegate to the Executive Director the authority to distribute the funds through a grant agreement with an award date of April 22, 2025.

Attachments

A. Meadow Creek Effectiveness Monitoring Proposal

Monitoring the effects of Stage 0 (valley reset) restoration on aquatic ecosystem productivity, fish, and biodiversity at Meadow Creek, Oregon

Background

Stage 0 or valley reset restoration targets floodplain areas that have been degraded due to land use practices, water management, or other causes, and is generally intended to enhance habitat for native fish and aquatic-riparian biota and to protect or restore water quality as well as natural flows (Ebersole et al., 1997; Roni et al., 2014). The design, objectives, and means with which to implement valley reset restoration have changed substantially over time due to the integration of new information from monitoring, coupled with research that has evaluated the effectiveness of restoration actions (Roni et al., 2014, Roni et al., 2018, Polivka et al., 2020). In recent years, "process-based restoration" has been recognized as ecologically beneficial and effective in reestablishing ecological processes compromised by site- or watershed-scale degradation (Beechie et al., 2010; Powers et al., 2019; Wohl et al., 2021). Innovative approaches to process-based restoration may target restoration of ecohydraulic characteristics such as floodplain inundation frequency and duration (e.g., Leopold and Wolman, 1957), connection at base flow (Flitcroft et al., 2022), and native biotic recovery (e.g., Cluer and Thorne, 2014; Hauer et al., 2016; Wohl et al., 2021).

Disconnection of floodplains from their rivers leads to degradation of natural processes. This lateral and vertical disconnection reduces the resilience of river systems by altering food webs, stream habitat availability and seasonal habitat complexity (Bellmore et al., 2015). Disconnection results from a variety of human actions including the removal of native species, river management associated with timber harvest such as splash dams, as well as construction of dikes, levees and ditches that force rivers into a single thread channel, inhibiting flooding (Poff et al., 1997; Wohl, 2011; Polvi and Wohl, 2013). Initial channelization is further exacerbated by incision associated with altered hydrologic regimes and the modification of sediment transport processes (Poff et al., 1997). Process-based rehabilitation and restoration practitioners hypothesize that restoring ecological processes and floodplain connectivity will reestablish the capacity of streams and wetlands to be resilient against environmental stochasticity and natural disturbances with increasingly minimal human intervention (Sear 1994; Ebersole et al., 1997; Wohl et al., 2005).

Valley reset (e.g., stage 0 or stage 8; Cluer and Thorne 2014; Powers et al., 2017) restoration is intended to reconnect rivers and floodplains, thus resetting valley-scale processes (hydrologic, geologic geomorphic and biological) to improve the resilience and sustainability of ecosystem services. Several valley-reset type restoration projects have been implemented in the last decade, and preliminary findings suggest they show signs of progress towards desired geophysical and biological outcomes (Flitcroft et al. 2022). However, implementation and effectiveness monitoring has been predominantly focused in low-elevation wet-forest environments and on reach and/or project-scale responses, leaving considerable uncertainty about the applicability and efficacy of this approach in high-elevation dry-forest environments. Further, monitoring efforts have primarily focused on abiotic factors, leaving an important information gap regarding fish responses to this type of restoration.

In 2023, the US Forest Service and partners began to work together to co-develop a watershed-scale process-based restoration effort that became the Meadow Creek Collaborative. Consisting of implementors, managers, and scientists from 17 different organizations, the Meadow Creek Collaborative is working to develop a whole-watershed restoration plan that incorporates historical information, baseline data, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge to identify restoration needs in upland, riparian and valley-floor settings within the Meadow Creek watershed.

The entire project encompasses multiple reaches with a total restored river length of 38km spanning federal, tribal, and private ownerships. The convergence of restoration implementation and monitoring as described here represents a rare opportunity to assess biological responses to floodplain reconnection using a statistically rigorous study design. Additionally, this work has direct implications for understanding ecosystem response to valley reset restoration as it relates to the sustainable production of tribal first foods (Jones et al. 2008). Reconnecting streams to their floodplains is at the forefront of planning efforts that coordinate monitoring with implementation. Knowledge gaps targeted in this monitoring effort focus on fish growth, movement, and survival as well as secondary productivity and biodiversity.

This monitoring effort will focus on contributing to these knowledge gaps, and highlights three *Key Monitoring Questions* to be evaluated at site, and reach scales:

1) *How does steelhead (O. mykiss) diet, movement, growth and survival respond to valley reset restoration?*
2) *How does the community of native and non-native fish respond to valley reset restoration?*
3) *How do benthic macroinvertebrate communities respond to valley reset restoration?*

Meadow Creek Floodplain Restoration Study

Study Design

To directly evaluate the key monitoring questions and broader monitoring goal to understand aquatic biota response to valley reset restoration efforts, the Aquatic Biota Workgroup (consisting of staff from the Grande Ronde Model Watershed (GRMW), the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation [CTUIR], Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission [CRITFC], Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife [ODFW], and USDA Forest Service [USFS]) worked closely with implementors to develop a floodplain restoration and monitoring implementation study plan that accommodates the nuanced process of project planning and implementation, and utilizes a statistically robust survey design (Table 1). The study design prioritized four key considerations:

1) *At least three years of pre- and post-restoration data collection.*
2) *Data collection that is not compromised by impacts from upstream restoration efforts (e.g., sediment/turbidity, fish displacement).*
3) *Maximize the opportunity for before-after control-impact design with paired treatment and control sites wherever possible.*
4) *A restoration and monitoring design that allows ample time in the implementation window for work to be completed.*

Table 1. Meadow Creek floodplain restoration implementation and monitoring schedule for stage 0 or valley reset projects. *Time refers to the expected duration of restoration implementation.

Reach	Subreach	Subreach description	Core sites	Paired subreach	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	Implementor	*Time
2	2A	Meadow above Waucup Cr	2	2B	*P*	*BT*	*BT*	*BT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AT*	*AT*	*AT*			Enterprise Team	1 year
2	2B	Waucup Cr	2	2A	*P*	*BC*	*BC*	*BC*					*AC*	*AC*	*AC*	*AIT*	*AIT*	Enterprise Team	1 year
2	2C	Meadow below Waucup Cr	0	None	*P*				*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*						Enterprise Team	1 year
4	4A	Meadow above Ray Cr	0	None												*AIT*	*AIT*	Enterprise Team	1 year
4	4B	Meadow above Bally Canyon	2	4C	*P*	*BC*	*BC*	*BC*					*AC*	*AC*	*AC*	*AIT*	*AIT*	Enterprise Team	1 year
4	4C	Meadow below Bally Canyon "Splash Dam"	2	4B	*P*	*BT*	*BT*	*BT*	*AIT*	*AIT*			*AT*	*AT*	*AT*			Enterprise Team	1-2 years
4	4D	Meadow above Battle Cr (MC_RM8 Ph II)	2	4E	*P*	*BC*	*BC*	*BC*					*AC*	*AC*	*AC*	*AIT*	*AIT*	CTUIR	1-2 years
4	4E	Meadow at Battle Cr (MC_RM8 Ph I)	2	4D	*P*	*BT*	*BT*	*BT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AT*	*AT*	*AT*			CTUIR	1-2 years
5	5A	Meadow above McIntyre Rd	2	5B	*P*	*BC*	*BC*	*BC*					*AC*	*AC*	*AC*	*AIT*	*AIT*	CTUIR	1-2 years
5	5B	Meadow below McIntyre Rd	2	5A	*P*	*BT*	*BT*	*BT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AT*	*AT*	*AT*			CTUIR	2 years
5	5C	McCoy above McIntyre Rd	2	5D	*P*	*BC*	*BC*	*BC*					*AC*	*AC*	*AC*	*AIT*	*AIT*	CTUIR	1-2 years
5	5D	McCoy below McIntyre Rd	2	5C	*P*	*BT*	*BT*	*BT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AT*	*AT*	*AT*			CTUIR	2 years
5	5E	McCoy Meadows Confluence	0	None	*P*				*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*						CTUIR	2 years
6	6A - 6E	Bear Creek	0	None					*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*	*AIT*				*AIT*	*AIT*	Enterprise Team	1 year

A = After, B = Before, C = Control, P = Pilot, T = Treatment, AIT = Acceptable Implementation Timing

We have designed a robust before-after-control-impact (BACI) study design. BACI studies continue to be the gold standard in evaluating causal, rather than correlative relationships. These study designs tend to be rare in aquatic restoration evaluation efforts, and opportunities that allow for the optimization of study design to the benefit of monitoring and knowledge development as well as implementation are unusual. In this project, the window of three years of pre-data collection is paired with three years of post- restoration data collection. By collecting across all sites in the same years, we will be able to capture inter-annual variability. By having a block of four years for restoration implementation, this provides practitioners with logistical flexibility to complete work in a manner that is most practical for them. This approach also minimizes the need to account for changes in site conditions resulting from active floodplain reset work (e.g. movement of fishes into or out of sites due to disturbance, fines or other material filtering from upstream restoration sites, etc.), potentially confounding monitoring effort observations and results.

Multiple configurations of study design have been considered and discussed within the Meadow Creek Collaborative. The Meadow Creek restoration plan includes a variety of treatments, based on site-specific needs and habitat potential (e.g., large wood placement, fencing, forest thinning). To respond to our key monitoring questions, the focus of biological evaluation is only on those reaches planned for Stage 0 or valley reset restoration. This form of restoration is least well understood and is likely to be the most impactful to aquatic ecosystems.

The most current iteration of this design (summarized in Table 1) consists of four distinct restoration reaches (reaches 2, 4, 5, and 6; Figure 1) ranging in size from 7.8 to 11.4 km (mean = 9.4 km) and covering approximately 38 total km of stream channel and 915 acres of floodplain area (Table 2). Of the 248 km of potential steelhead habitat within the Meadow Creek watershed (based on StreamNet steelhead distribution layer), approximately 15 % is proposed for floodplain restoration and an additional 9 % is proposed for other instream restoration treatments. The river reaches selected for monitoring (reaches 2, 4, and 5) capture three different locations along the riverscape continuum including headwater areas, the mid-river mainstem channel, and the lower unconfined valley at the confluence of McCoy and Meadow creeks. Restoration planned in these reaches will encompass the entire valley floor as delineated by the USFS based on similarities in channel morphology, gradient, and geomorphic inflection points in the longitudinal elevation profile as described in Powers et al. (2019).

We further divided the restoration reaches into “subreaches” to allow for designation of paired control and treatment sites resulting in a robust before-after control-impact (BACI) design. Upstream control subreaches were paired with downstream treatment subreaches based on similarities in streamflow/drainage area and geomorphic conditions (e.g., gradient, valley confinement). Subreaches lacking a suitable control (e.g., subreaches 2C, 4A, and 5E) will not be monitored for biological response. Additionally, while reach 6 is planned for stage-0 restoration, it was not included for monitoring due to its relatively low flow and because of limited resources for monitoring. Thus, paired control and treatment reaches will be monitored in three of the four reaches identified for valley reset restoration (reaches 2, 4 and 5; Table 1 and Figure 1).

Each subreach was divided into six sample sites with each site measuring roughly 1/6th of the total valley length. Thus, sample site size was scaled to be evenly representative across all subreaches, ranging in length from 183 m to 613 m (mean = 359 m; Table 2). Sample sites within each subreach consist of 2 core and 4 supplemental sites (Figure 1), resulting in a total of 20 core sites (2 each in each subreach). Core sites were selected using systematic random sampling and represent the primary sample sites for aquatic biota monitoring. Supplemental sites are used for capturing and tagging additional salmonids if a minimum target sample size for each subreach is not met through sampling of core sites.

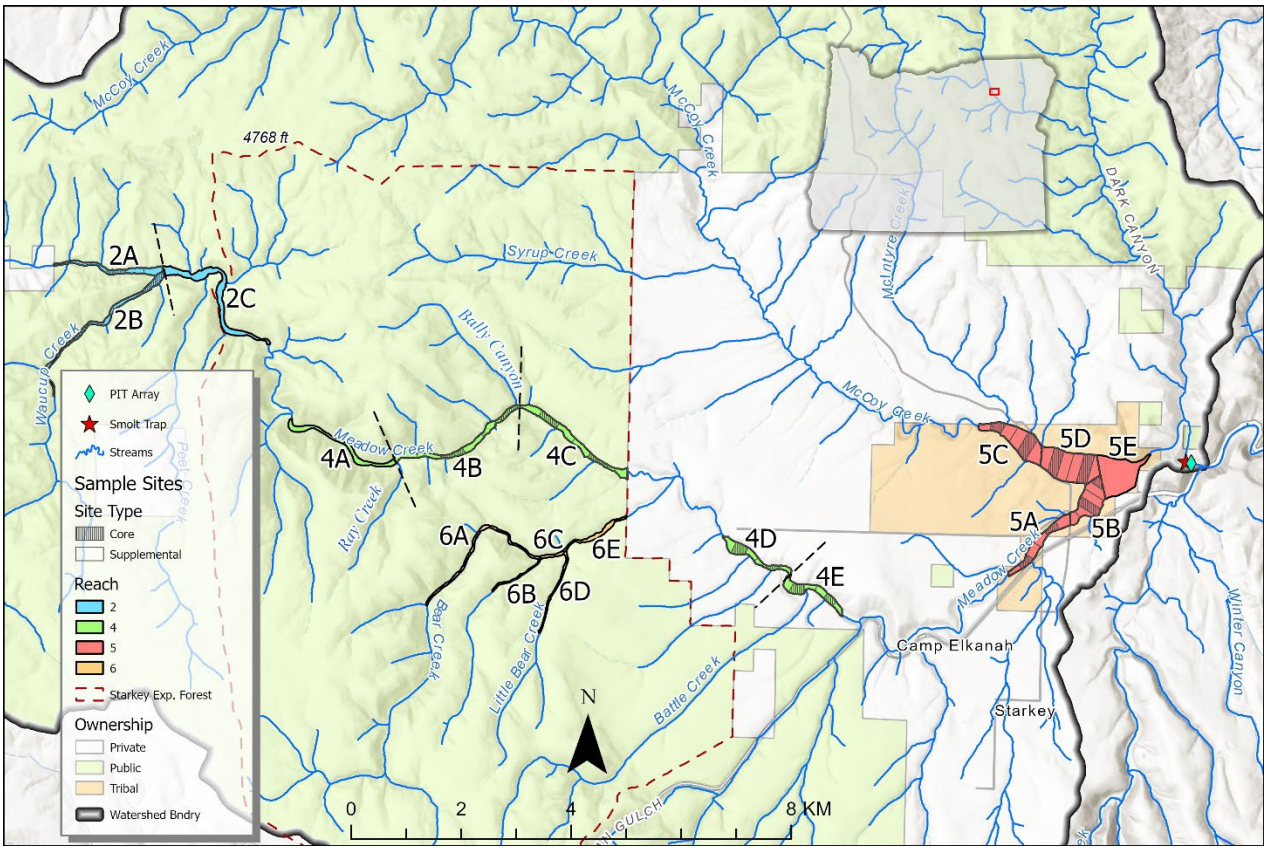

Figure 1. Restoration and monitoring reaches at Meadow Creek, OR. Reaches with restoration and monitoring include 2, 4, 5. Subreaches (e.g., 2A-2C), and sample sites (core and supplemental) are contained within the larger reaches.

Table 2. Summary of Meadow Creek restoration subreach area, length, and number of monitoring sites.

Reach	Subreach	Valley area (acres)	Valley length (m)	Stream length (m)	Core sites (i.e., replicates)	Mean site valley length (m)	Mean site stream length (m)
2	2A	36.4	2033	2434	2	339	406
2	2B	46.4	3402	3676	2	567	613
2	2C	72.6	3075	3883			
4	4A	38.2	2307	2502			
4	4B	56.7	2652	2958	2	442	493
4	4C	58.0	2348	2525	2	391	421
4	4D	38.8	1471	1709	2	245	285
4	4E	42.1	1370	1738	2	228	290
5	5A	51.6	1534	1737	2	256	289
5	5B	72.2	1006	1096	2	168	183
5	5C	91.3	1316	2011	2	219	335
5	5D	129.7	1149	1655	2	191	276
5	5E	108.6	1027	1988			
6	6A	29.3	3082	3151			
6	6B	6.9	1108	1163			
6	6C	5.3	434	444			
6	6D	11.9	1586	1680			
6	6E	18.7	1372	1404			
	Min	5.3	434	444	2	168	183
	Max	129.7	3402	3883	2	567	613
	Mean	50.8	1793	2097	2	305	359
	Sum	914.6	32270	37752	20	3047	3590

Sampling timing and frequency

Aquatic biota sampling within a given subreach will follow the schedule outlined in Table 1, with reduced aquatic biota monitoring efforts (i.e., smolt trapping only) occurring during restoration implementation years (2028-2031 and 2035-2036; orange boxes). Sampling dates and timeframes within a sampling year for fish and aquatic macroinvertebrates differ by sampling type as described below.

For fish sampling efforts, each core site will be sampled twice each year during spring/early summer (June) and fall (September) in years prescribed in Table 1. These time periods were selected to allow for measurement of fish growth through the summer while avoiding sampling during mid-summer when water temperatures are prohibitively warm, causing stress to captured individuals. Additionally, relatively low flow occurs from June through September, facilitating fish capture. Finally, sampling during spring and fall provides an opportunity to evaluate

seasonal differences in fish species assemblage, abundance, and distribution as well as growth and movement through recapturing *O. mykiss* which were tagged during previous sampling efforts. Sampling at supplemental sites will occur on an as-needed basis and is focused primarily on capturing salmonids to increase within-reach sample sizes of tagged *O. mykiss* and recaptures of *O. mykiss* tagged during previous sampling efforts.

Benthic macroinvertebrate samples will be collected at all core sites during summer (July-August) using the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Rivers and Streams Assessment Field Operations Manual for Wadeable streams (USEPA 2022). This protocol involves collecting kick samples (1 ft^2 each, 500 µm mesh size) for benthic invertebrates at 11 points selected systematically after a random start along a stream reach and distributed evenly across each site. Samples collected within each core site will be combined into a single composite sample prior to processing consistent with the USEPA protocol.

Smolt outmigrant sampling will be conducted in the spring and fall during periods of highest outmigration potential, typically when water temperatures and flows begin to deviate from the previous season's conditions. Thus, dates when the outmigrant trap is operational will vary annually in response to environmental conditions. Smolt outmigrant sampling will be conducted throughout the duration of this study, including implementation years.

Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) antenna arrays will be used at multiple locations within the Meadow Creek watershed to detect directional fish movement and provide passive observation data on the status of a PIT tagged fish. PIT arrays are installed with the intent of year-round operation, although, solar/wind energy production tends to be at a minimum during the winter, and arrays may shut down temporarily. However, down-times generally coincide with periods when migratory fish are stationary, and the potential for missing fish movement events is typically low.

Metrics to Address Key Monitoring Questions

The Aquatic Biota Workgroup identified numerous metrics (organized into 14 metric categories; Table 3) derived from four sampling categories: electrofishing sampling; PIT array operations; smolt outmigrant trapping, and benthic macroinvertebrate sampling. Below we generally describe the types of data to be collected in each effort and rationale for collection. Table 3 outlines which efforts specifically contribute to each metric category.

Table 3. Aquatic biota monitoring metric categories addressed by separate but integrated sampling efforts.

Aquatic Biota Metric Categories	Sampling Effort Category			
	Electrofishing (OWEB and In-Kind)	PIT Array Operations (In-Kind)	Smolt Outmigrant Trapping (In-Kind)	Benthic Macroinvertebrate Sampling (OWEB and In-Kind)
Fish species composition (count by species)	✓			
Salmonid relative abundance	✓	✓	✓	
Salmonid length and weight	✓		✓	
Non-salmonid length and weight	✓		✓	
Salmonid growth rate	✓		✓	
Salmonid diet consumption and composition	✓		✓	
Salmonid emigration and immigration	✓	✓	✓	
Salmonid survival to the mouth and to Lower Granite Dam	✓	✓	✓	
Salmonid effective adult population size and number of breeders	✓		✓	
Benthic macroinvertebrate biomass				✓
Benthic macroinvertebrate community composition				✓
Benthic macroinvertebrate - ecosystem health (e.g., O/E RIVPACS, Shannon diversity index, indicator species analysis)				✓
Benthic macroinvertebrate - prey availability for salmonids (Rader 1997)	✓			✓

Electrofishing sampling

Fish community composition, relative abundance, growth, movement, survival and diet responses to valley reset restoration are critical knowledge gaps and thus represent areas of emphasis during electrofishing sampling – primarily for *O. mykiss* which is the predominant salmonid species in the Meadow Creek watershed and an important target for recovery. Electrofishing sampling at each core site will consist of capturing and enumerating all species of fish present at that site. These data will provide insights on relative abundance and community composition within and across the site, and reach. Fish lengths and weights will also be collected for all species during core site surveys. *O. mykiss* will be PIT tagged to uniquely identify individuals during subsequent electrofishing or smolt trap sampling events. This allows for the calculation of growth rates over time, potential movement among sites, and fish detections for estimating survival rates. Fish diet sampling will also occur during electrofishing surveys. Diet data from salmonids will be used to evaluate available food resources and potential linkages with growth rates and subsequent survival before and after restoration.

The fish responses of relative abundance, growth, movement, survival and diet were selected for the project, while keeping the anticipated post-restoration complexity of restored reaches in mind. Electrofishing in post-restoration sites is challenging. Thus, we are not relying on estimation of fish abundance using mark-recapture or depletion removal to quantify fish response to restoration in Meadow Creek. Rather, we are focusing on relative abundance of fishes from a single electrofishing pass. Additionally, fish movement, survival, and parr-to-smolt growth will rely on fish captured at the smolt trap or detected at PIT tag arrays rather than on recaptures of fish within the restoration sites, which will likely be challenging post-restoration.

PIT Array Operations

Fish movement into and out of the restored portions of Meadow Creek is a key measure that will be explored in this project as a means of evaluating fish response to valley reset restoration. All partners are collaborating in the installation, maintenance, and monitoring of multiple PIT-tag arrays in Meadow Creek, and in other portions of the Upper Grande Ronde Basin. Juvenile salmonids will be PIT tagged throughout the Meadow Creek watershed and neighboring watersheds/subbasins to track movement into and out of Meadow Creek. These data also provide individual fish observation data that can be used to estimate survival across multiple spatial and temporal scales. To date, there is one operational PIT array located at the downstream end of the Meadow Creek watershed below the smolt migration trap, and two more PIT array locations are planned for installation in 2025 (locations TBD).

Smolt Outmigrant Trapping

CTUIR staff will operate a smolt trap during this study to count salmonids migrating out of the Meadow Creek watershed. Funding for this activity is provided by BPA and BOR and is not part of this grant proposal request.

The smolt trap is located on Meadow Creek downstream of all tributaries so that fish tagged in any part of the watershed has a potential to be recaptured at the trap. Salmonid species handled at the trap will be scanned for PIT tags and new tags implanted if no existing tag is present. Length and weight, species, date of capture, and water temperature will be recorded. A genetic sample from a sub-sample of fish captures may also be taken. Non-salmonid species will be enumerated and released downstream of the trap (direction of travel). A sub-sample of tagged salmonids will be released approximately 200 meters upstream of the trap at the Meadow Creek flow gauge and their re-capture used to estimate trap efficiency.

The smolt trap is checked a minimum of 3 times per week with increased checks during higher flow events (when there is a risk of debris floating downstream) and during peak outmigration times (typically spring and fall).

CTUIR is responsible for the ESA take permitting application and reporting for the operation of the smolt trap.

Macroinvertebrates

Trait-based sensitivity of macroinvertebrates has been established with respect to sediment loads, thermal conditions, and other habitat characteristics (Poff et al. 2010, Relyea et al. 2012, Hubler et al. 2016). These relationships allow for the characterization of macroinvertebrate communities that are associated with different environmental conditions. We anticipate changes in abundance, composition and biomass of macroinvertebrates at the sites following restoration. We are particularly interested in changes in total biomass associated with inundated area at base flow, hence sampling will be completed during the summer.

CRITFC will be responsible for developing the macroinvertebrate Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) and submitting this to DEQ for approval. CRITFC will also manage the macroinvertebrate data and submit dataset to DEQ in their required format annually.

Budget Description

The Aquatic Biota Workgroup of the Meadow Creek Collaborative is requesting funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to conduct three years of pre-implementation monitoring following the study design and sampling plan described in this proposal. We successfully completed a pilot year data collection effort for this study in 2024, which resolved several concerns of feasibility and potential lack of sufficient sample sizes to provide meaningful information from the data collected. As a result, the Aquatic Biota Workgroup worked closely with implementors to finalize an implementation and monitoring schedule and intends to continue monitoring efforts following that schedule for the remainder of the study timeframe.

Due to unforeseen federal budget shortfalls and changes in funding priorities in late 2024, project partners currently have limited resources and funding to continue implementing monitoring for this study as prescribed. This funding request to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board will provide supplemental capacity and resources needed to complete pre-implementation monitoring for the years 2025-2027. Funds requested from OWEB will be directly applied to two categories; electrofishing fish sampling efforts in the spring and fall as well as macroinvertebrate sampling

mid-summer, and processing of macroinvertebrate samples collected during mid-summer sampling. As such, detailed reporting on these two project elements will be produced through a Project Completion Report in 2028.

Smolt outmigrant trapping and PIT array operations have been detailed throughout this proposal to demonstrate the nuanced and integrated approach the Aquatic Biota Workgroup is implementing for this project. These efforts demonstrate the synergy of data collection among partners that can serve as in-kind contributions to this project, should OWEB contribute to this project.

Annual reporting requirements will include the summary and submission of macroinvertebrate datasets to DEQ. Additionally, the Aquatic Biota workgroup intends to provide annual reports of the described in-kind contributions as evidence of in-kind work completion. Table 4 provides a description of work and annual/final deliverables for the Aquatic Biota Workgroup funding request to Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. Table 5 provides a breakdown of the specific elements of this project which the Aquatic Biota Workgroup is requesting funding from OWEB and Table 6 offers a general description of the in-kind contributions from project partners directly related to monitoring activities.

Table 4: Description of work and annual/final deliverables for Aquatic Biota Workgroup funding request to Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

Monitoring Study	Description of work	2025-2027 Annual Deliverables	Final Deliverable (2028)
Fish Monitoring	▶ Conduct seasonal capture of fish at designated sites following implementation and monitoring schedule. Measure length, weight, and record conditional comments. Scan fish for PIT tag and record if present. ▶ PIT tag salmonids and manage PIT tag data in PTAGIS and Aquatic Biota Workgroup database. ▶ Compile passive observations from PIT tag arrays and upload to PTAGIS. ▶ Manage survey details, fish data and PIT tag data in Aquatic Biota Workgroup database. Provide updates to group on databse structure revisions and data uploads on an as needed basis. Ensure up-to-date database is accessible to partners.	**Annual Summary Report containing:** ▶ Total sampling events completed in 2025-2027. ▶ General description of fish metrics collected in each year. ▶ Review of observations of any PIT tagged fish at PIT arrays. ▶ Lessons Learned section updated annually.	**Detailed Pre-Implementation Monitoring Synthesis Report containing:** ▶ Review of data collection efforts. ▶ Detailed analysis of all data related to Aquatic Biota Metric Categories. ▶ Lessons Learned.
Macroinvertebrates Monitoring	▶ Benthic macroinvertebrate data collection. Laboratory sample processing, data management and analysis. ▶ Write a SAP for review and approval by DEQ.	▶ Annually submit benthic macroinvertebrate data to DEQ for archiving.	▶ Assessment and analysis of macroinvertebrate datasets including biomass, species composition, and density will be completed.

Table 5. Budget breakdown of Aquatic Biota Workgroup funding request to Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

Monitoring Type, Description, (Lead Partners)	Budget Categories	2025 Budget		2026 Budget		2027 Budget		2028 Budget		Total OWEB Request	Total Cost
		OWEB	In-Kind	OWEB	In-Kind	OWEB	In-Kind	OWEB	In-Kind		
Biological Monitoring											
Aquatic Biota Data Collection (CRITFC, CTUIR, ODFW, USFS): fish capture, PIT tagging, diet collection, data management, BMI collection	Contracted Services (ODFW) : Staffing to conduct fish capture, PIT tagging, diet collection, data management		$241,000	$74,000	$197,000	$74,000	$197,000		$66,349	$148,000	$849,349
Macroinvertebrate Processing (CRITFC, CTUIR, ODFW, USFS): collection once per year and lab analysis	Contracted Services (CRITFC, Aquatic Biology Associates) : Laboratory sample processing (Aquatic Biology Associates), data management, SAP, submission to DEQ, analysis (CRITFC)	$25,000	$10,600	$16,000	$10,600	$16,000	$10,600			$57,000	$88,800
Data Synthesis											
Pre-Implementation Monitoring Synthesis Report (Early 2028)	Contracted Services (ODFW, CRITFC, CTUIR) :		$44,400	$20,000	$24,400	$20,000	$24,400	$30,000	$24,400	$70,000	$187,600
Administrative											
GRMW Grant Management	(GRMW) Fiscal admin and contracted services management (10%)	$2,500		$11,000		$11,000		$3,000		$24,500	$24,500
TOTALS		$27,500	$296,000	$121,000	$232,000	$121,000	$232,000	$33,000	$90,749	$299,500	$1,150,249

Table 6. Description of in-kind contributions referred to in Table 5.

Agency	Description of in-kind contribution
CRITFC	Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission will use existing funding from Bonneville Power Administration as an in-kind contribution to this project in the form of personnel (full time and seasonal technicians) for field data collection and synthesis, equipment/supplies, processing of invertebrate samples, SAP, submission of macroinvertebrate data to DEQ, travel costs, facilities costs (CRITFC field house), and indirect costs (33%).
CTUIR	Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation will be using existing funding from Bonneville Power Administration and the Bureau of Reclamation as match for field work in 2025 through 2028 by providing full time employees and seasonal staff to participate in operation of a smolt trap, aquatic biota data collection, QA/QC, data uploads, reporting, project coordination and ESA fish take permitting. CTUIR will continue smolt outmigrant monitoring in 2028 to capture fish tagged during efforts in 2025-2027.
ODFW	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Grand Ronde Basin Salmonid Life Cycle Monitoring Project plans to complete monitoring in 2025 with existing funds. The GRLCM project also operates and maintains five PIT arrays in the Upper Grande Ronde subbasin which will (or practically could) provide observational data that assist in the interpretation of this project's data. Operating this infrastructure requires frequent visits to each site to download data, inspect for maintenance needs, and perform maintenance as it is needed. These sites also experience equipment failure and/or damage which require regular purchasing of materials to fix sites and keep them operational. Data collected from these sites also requires significant personnel time to download, QA/QC, upload data, and maintain site metadata and site maintenance logs in PTAGIS.
USFS	USDA Forest Service funded the post-doc who is employed by CRITFC who is currently analyzing historic smolt trap data for Meadow Creek in order to provide an empirical foundation for our analysis. Our post-doc also helped develop the macroinvertebrate sampling design, and has made multiple presentations related to historic trap numbers at community meetings and professional organizations.

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OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item E

Grantee Panel Presentation

Luckiamute Confluence

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360
Salem OR 97301-1290
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Agenda Item E supports all of OWEB's Strategic Plan priorities.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Liz Redon, Willamette Basin Regional Program Representative

SUBJECT: Agenda Item E – Grantee panel presentation: Restoring Luckiamute State Natural Area and Luckiamute River Confluence

April 22-23, 2025, Board Meeting

I. Introduction

Greenbelt Land Trust, Luckiamute Watershed Council, and Oregon State Parks will present on past and planned restoration at the Luckiamute State Natural Area and Luckiamute Confluence. This partnership has been collaborating for more than 15 years to create one of the largest forested floodplain networks along the Willamette River.

II. Background

Luckiamute State Natural Area (LSNA) straddles the Benton/Polk County line along the Willamette River. At the boat-in campground at the northern end of LSNA is a spectacular view of the convergence of three rivers: the Luckiamute River, the Santiam River and the mighty Willamette River. Looking downstream from this vantage point, you can see the Santiam empty its waters into the Willamette. Then just a stone's throw downriver of this confluence is where the waters of the Luckiamute and Willamette Rivers are joined. According to Oregon State University (OSU) research, this intermingling of three of the area's most important rivers hosts the second-most diverse fish population in the Willamette Valley (the McKenzie-Willamette confluence tops the list). LSNA is best known for its large remnant of deciduous "gallery forest" – a forest of majestic cottonwoods and maples arching high over an exceptionally diverse understory. These increasingly rare habitats are critical to the survival of many kinds of neo-tropical migratory birds, as well as a wide variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, amphibians, and turtles. Less well known is that about a third of the Natural Area, and much more of the surrounding neighborhood, was historically grassland (prairie and oak savanna), which has become the Willamette Valley's most threatened habitat type. (*https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/luckiamute-state-natural-area-enhancement.html*)

Luckiamute Confluence holds 110 acres of crucial floodplain habitat on the Willamette and Luckiamute Rivers and connects two separated units of state park land at LSNAhttps://stateparks.oregon.gov/index.cfm?do=park.profile&parkId=192. The protection and

restoration of this property is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for habitat and recreation. Currently in agricultural production, over half of the property regularly floods, providing quiet, off-channel habitat that is vital for Steelhead, Chinook, and other fish species. Luckiamute Confluence sits a little over one mile upstream from the confluence of the Santiam, Luckiamute, and Willamette Rivers and contains almost a half mile of river frontage on both the Willamette and Luckiamute. The places where rivers come together are biologically rich habitats supporting a wide diversity of fish, bird, and other wildlife species. They are also important cultural sites for Indigenous people, and popular fishing, boating, and recreation areas. Luckiamute Confluence now adds to the protection of this confluence area, providing increased fish and wildlife habitat, and increased recreation opportunities.
(https://greenbeltlandtrust.org/conserving-land/luckiamute-confluence/)

III. Long Term Investments in Restoration

OWEB investments in LSNA began under the Special Investment Partnership (SIP) and continued under the Willamette Focused Investment Partnership (FIP), which are now leveraged by investments through Open Solicitation.

Building on 15 years of active restoration in the LSNA, Greenbelt Land Trust will plant a diverse floodplain forest at the Luckiamute Confluence, enhancing habitat connectivity between the Luckiamute and Willamette Rivers, and eventually creating one of the largest intact forests on the mid-Willamette River. When completed, it is expected that more than 1,000 acres of continuous floodplain forest will be restored.

IV. Protecting and Restoring Habitat for Native Species through Voluntary Action

Measure 76 and the corresponding constitutional language states that lottery funds shall be used to accomplish the following: (a) Protect and improve water quality in Oregon's rivers, lakes, and streams by restoring natural watershed functions or stream flows; (b) Secure long-term protection for lands and waters that provide significant habitats for native fish and wildlife; (c) Restore and maintain habitats needed to sustain healthy and resilient populations of native fish and wildlife; (d) Maintain the diversity of Oregon's plants, animals and ecosystems; (e) Involve people in voluntary actions to protect, restore and maintain the ecological health of Oregon's lands and waters; and (f) Remedy the conditions that limit the health of fish and wildlife, habitats and watershed functions in greatest need of conservation.

The protection and restoration actions occurring at the LSNA and Luckiamute Confluence achieve all of these goals. Together, partners are restoring natural river and floodplain processes that will provide lasting impacts for the benefit of fish and wildlife populations while promoting climate resilience in the area.

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item F

Fall 2024 Open Solicitations

Grant Offering Board Awards

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360
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Agenda Item F supports all of OWEB's Strategic Plan priorities.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Eric Williams, *Restoration Grants Manager*
Katie Duzik, *North Coast Regional Program Representative*
Mark Grenbemer, *Southwest Oregon Regional Program Representative*
Liz Redon, *Willamette Basin Regional Program Representative*
Greg Ciannella, *Central Oregon Regional Program Representative*
Coby Menton, *Eastern Oregon Regional Program Representative*
Amy Charette, *Mid-Columbia Regional Program Representative*

SUBJECT: Agenda Item F. Fall 2024 Open Solicitation Grant Offering
April 22-23, 2025, Board Meeting

I. Introduction

This staff report describes the Fall 2024 Open Solicitation Grant Offering and funding recommendations. Staff request the board approve the funding recommendations outlined in Attachment D to the staff report, including funding for:

- 36 Restoration grants
- 18 Technical Assistance grants
- 5 Engagement grants

II. Fall 2024 Grant Offering Background and Summary

A total of 124 applications were received requesting over $28 million. Attachment A shows applications submitted by region, project type and funding request.

III. Review Process

Staff facilitated a review process where all eligible grant applications were evaluated by the agency's six Regional Review Teams (RRTs). The RRTs are made up of technical experts from multiple state and federal agencies and tribes who are local to each region. Staff scheduled site visits for as many proposed projects as possible, with all RRT members invited to attend.

OWEB then facilitated RRT meetings in each region for Restoration, Technical Assistance and Engagement grant types. Reviewers considered the likelihood of success of the proposed project based on evaluation criteria in rule, Attachment B. After classifying applications as "Recommended," "Recommended with Conditions," or "Not Recommended," the RRTs prioritized the projects recommended for funding by application type.

The project evaluations and recommendations were distributed to all applicants. Attachment C includes the number of applications recommended for funding in each region by application type, as well as staff-recommended award totals by application type and region. Staff will forward to the

board any written comments received before the comment deadline regarding the project award recommendations.

IV. Salmon License Plate Projects

Staff recommends distributing $364,780 in salmon license plates funds to two recommended restoration projects:

- 225-1002, "Grindy Creek Tributary Fish Passage, LWD and Riparian Habitat Improvements," and
- 225-2002, "West Fork Trail RM 4.2 and Chicago Creek RM 0.1 Fish Passage Projects."

V. Sage-grouse Projects

At its April 2015 meeting, the board adopted a policy to make available at least $10 million through its granting programs over the next ten years to support projects located in Oregon's sagebrush/sage-steppe ecosystem that improve greater sage-grouse habitat. The recommended Fall 2024 Open Solicitation Grant awards include three projects that meet the criteria:

- 225-5019, Post Fire Recovery and Restoration in Response to the Durkee and Thompson Fires — requesting $444,140
- 225-5004, Hog Wild Thinning Phase II Clone — requesting $131,869
- 225-5018, Post Fire Recovery and Restoration in Response to The Town Gulch and Coyote Fires — requesting $530,441

If awarded, total funding for sage-grouse projects since 2015 will be $18,419,579.

VI. Funding Recommendation

Staff considered the RRT recommendations, funding availability and evaluation criteria in developing the staff funding recommendations provided in Attachment D. The funding recommendations for the Fall 2024 Open Solicitation Grant Offering are summarized in Table 1. This will be the fourth and final Open Solicitation grant award for the 2023-2025 biennium.

Staff recommend the board adjust the Open Solicitation amounts to move $859,018 from Technical Assistance for Cultural Resources to Technical Assistance and Engagement in the 2023-2025 Spending Plan included in the agenda section of the board book and award funds for the staff-recommended projects listed in Attachment D with an award date of April 22, 2025.

Table 1: Spending Plan and Funding Recommendations for Fall 2024 Grant Offering

Grant Type	Current Spending Plan	Awards to Date	Staff Recommendation for Award	Staff Recommendation for Addition to OS	Remaining Spending Plan Balance
Restoration	$37,491,933	$27,193,807	$10,083,738		$214,388
Technical Assistance	$6,800,000	$4,972,362	$2,672,757	$845,119	$0
Engagement	$2,000,000	$1,414,823	$599,076	$13,899	$0
Monitoring	$4,508,067	$4,508,067	N/A*		$0
TOTAL	**$50,800,000**	**$38,089,059**	**$13,355,571**	**$859,018**	**$214,388**

*Monitoring grants are not offered during the Fall Open Solicitation grant cycles.

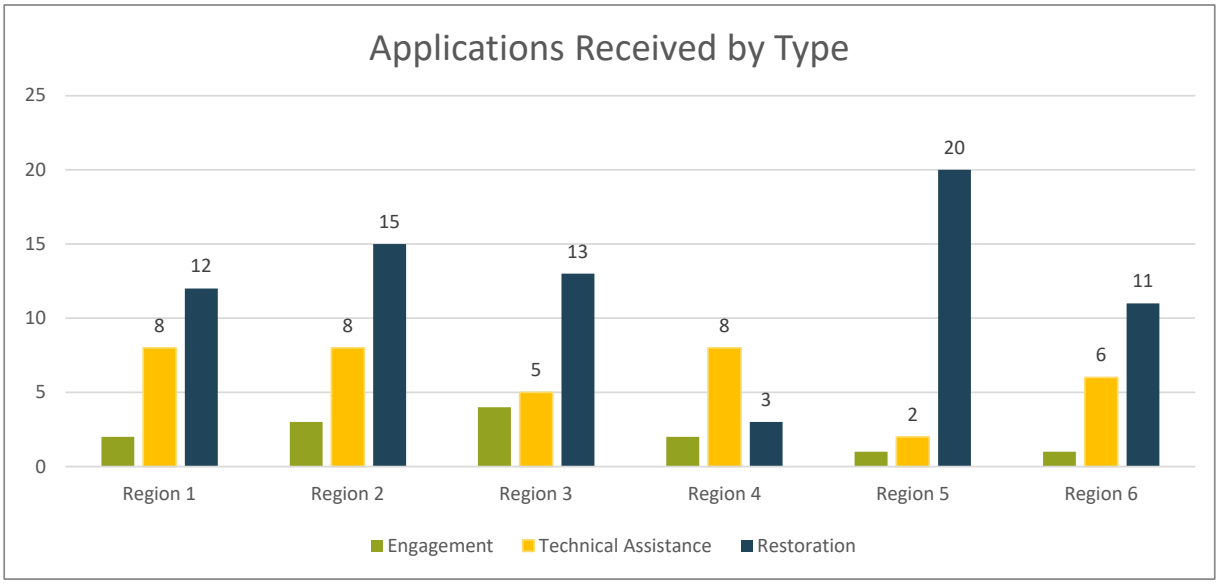
VII. Attachments

A. Grant Applications Submitted
B. Evaluation Criteria
C. Regional Review Team and Staff Funding Recommendations
D. Regions 1-6 Funding Recommendations

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Fall 2024 Open Solicitation Grant Offering

Applications Received by Type

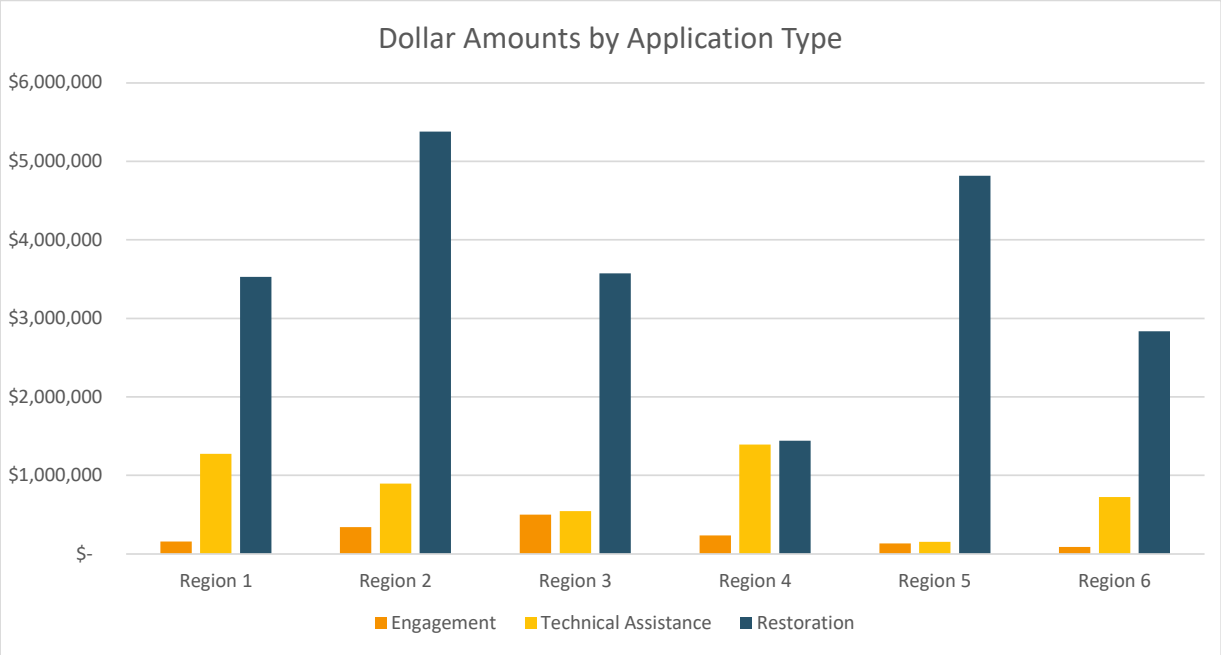
	Engagement	Technical Assistance	Restoration	Totals
Region 1	2	8	12	22
Region 2	3	8	15	26
Region 3	4	5	13	22
Region 4	2	8	3	13
Region 5	1	2	20	23
Region 6	1	6	11	18
Totals	**13**	**37**	**74**	**124**



Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Fall 2024 Open Solicitation Grant Offering

Dollar Amounts Requested by Application Type

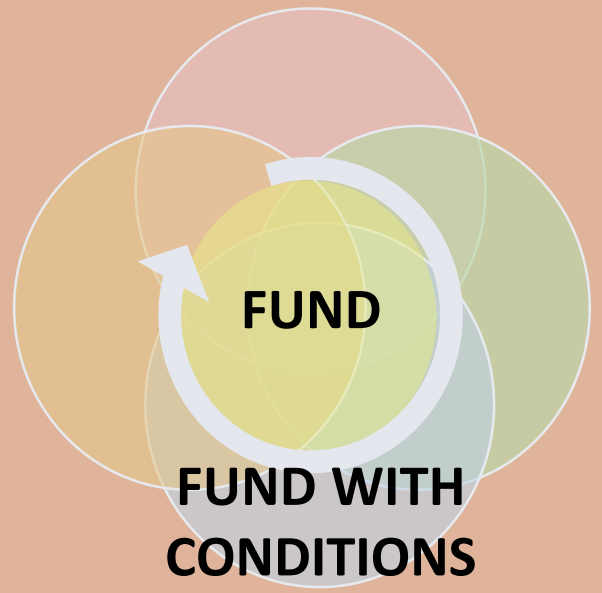
	Engagement	Technical Assistance	Restoration	Totals by Region
Region 1	$ 156,626	$ 1,274,024	$ 3,528,628	$ 4,959,278
Region 2	$ 340,810	$ 894,755	$ 5,376,379	$ 6,611,944
Region 3	$ 498,768	$ 545,742	$ 3,573,539	$ 4,618,049
Region 4	$ 234,824	$ 1,393,691	$ 1,440,381	$ 3,068,896
Region 5	$ 131,720	$ 155,330	$ 4,815,480	$ 5,102,530
Region 6	$ 87,184	$ 724,426	$ 2,833,259	$ 3,644,869
Total Requested	**$ 1,449,932**	**$ 4,987,968**	**$ 21,567,666**	**$ 28,005,566**



Open Solicitation- OAR Divisions 10, 15, 25, and 30

PROVIDE PUBLIC BENEFIT FOR WATER QUALITY, NATIVE FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT, OR WATERSHED/ECOSYSTEM FUNCTION

Recommend



Technical team reviews & evaluates each project individually based on how well project meets criteria

Prioritize

CRITERIA
How well project meets criteria for project evaluation & preferences, including:
- Causes over symptoms of disturbance
- Whole watershed approach over site-specific
- Collaboration over single-party

CERTAINTY OF SUCCESS
Certainty of success, based on the organizational capacity of the applicant & the likelihood the project will meet its ecological objectives

BENEFIT TO OREGON PLAN
Benefit to the Oregon Plan for Salmon & Watersheds, as evidenced by its expected benefits to watershed functions, fish habitat or water quality

COST BENEFIT
Project costs relative to the anticipated watershed health benefits

Recommendation to Staff

Staff review recommendations from each technical team & make a statewide funding recommendation to the Board base on available resources for the grant period & type.

RESTORATION

Evaluation Criteria
OAR 695-010-0060

Is the project ready to be implemented?

Does the application clearly state the project objectives & provide information about how those objectives will be met?

Will project be implemented using a clearly defined methods appropriate for addressing the problem?

All projects must meet the following:

- Will the project provide public benefit by supporting improved water quality, habitat, &/or ecosystem functions?
- Does the project demonstrate sound watershed management principles?
- Are project methods adapted to the project location?
- Will professionally accepted restoration approaches be followed?

Does the application provide an overall budget that reflects expected & quantified watershed health benefit?

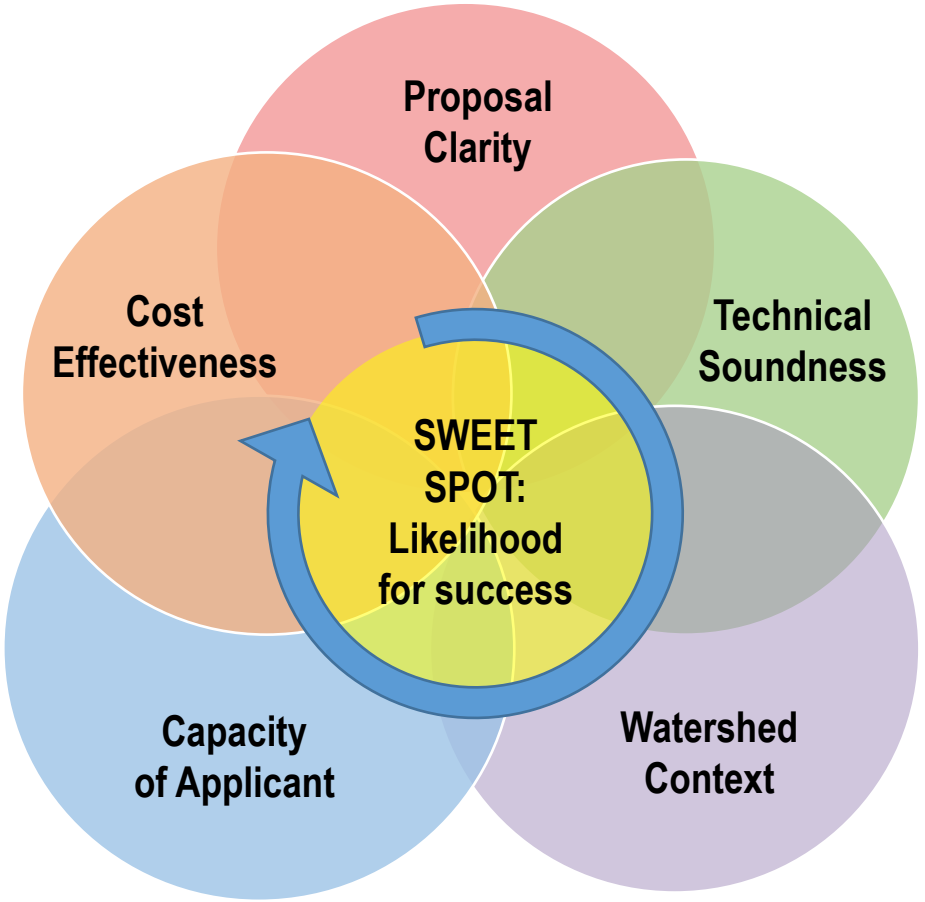
Does the budget reflect necessary costs & reasonable rates for direct costs?

Does the applicant have capacity for successful long-term stewardship & maintenance of the project?

Does the applicant have a proven track record managing projects, completing projects as proposed & reporting?

Will appropriate partners be engaged in the project?

How did/will engagement with local communities disproportionately impacted by climate change inform project?



Does the project address limiting factors or watershed issues by treating the causes rather than the symptoms of disturbance?

Were alternatives to address the identified problem identified & evaluated?

How are watershed benefits adequately quantified in the application?

How are changing climate conditions incorporated & how will project contribute to durable adaptation & resilience for ecosystems?

How has consideration of greenhouse gas emissions or long-term carbon sequestration or storage informed project?

How were likely impacts to the site & adjacent properties during & after project implementation considered?

What specific action(s) will be implemented that are within an explicit geography prioritized in a watershed restoration plan?

How does the project address watershed function & ecosystem processes, including water quality & the life stages of fish & wildlife?

How does the project fit within the context of past & planned future restoration efforts in the watershed?

How will the project promote public awareness that may lead to opportunities for watershed restoration?

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

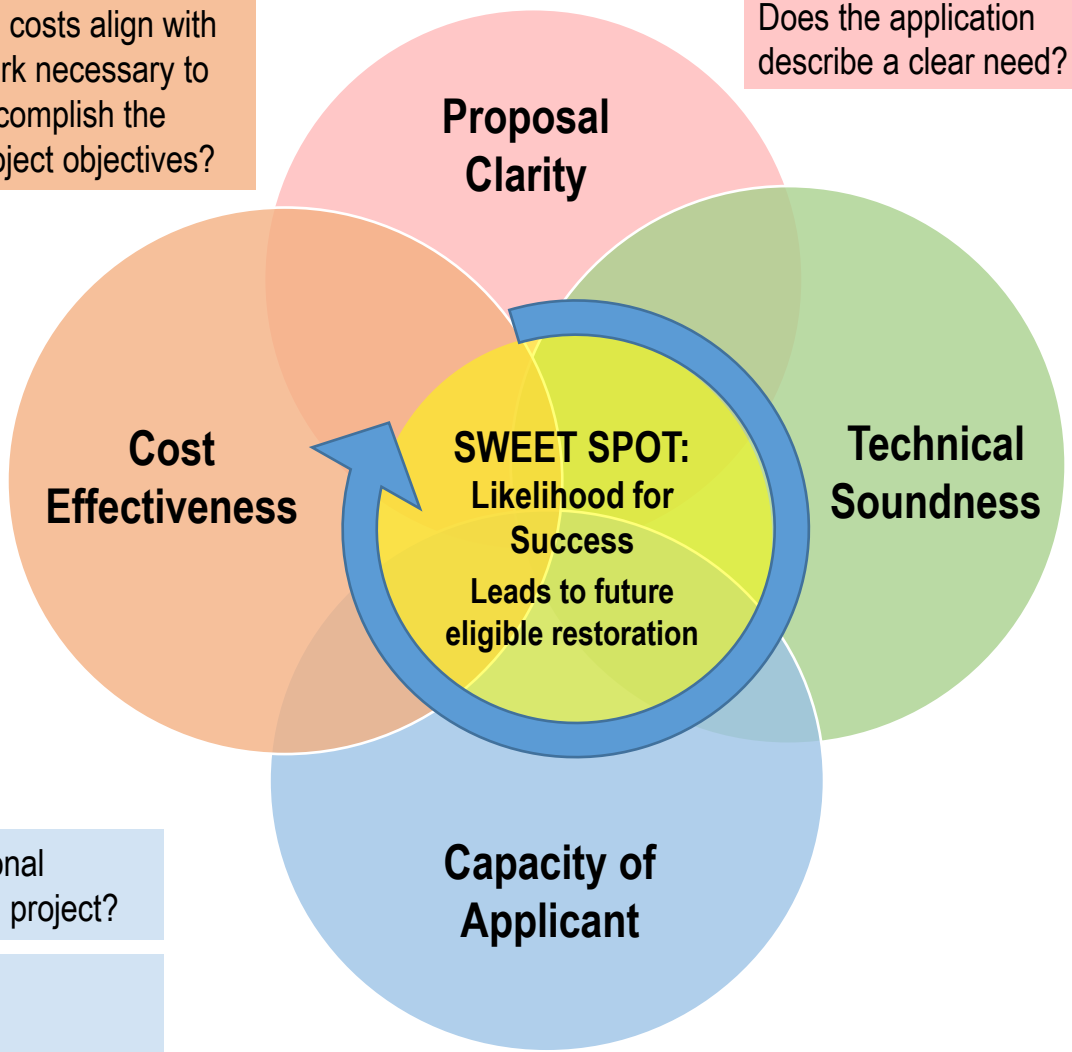
Evaluation Criteria
OAR 695-030-0045

Technical Design & Engineering = project feasibility reports, designs, or engineering materials that directly lead to site-specific restoration or acquisition projects within a specified timeframe.

Resource Assessment & Planning = information about existing water quality or habitat conditions and processes at an identified scale, and relates those conditions and processes to actions that will directly lead to desired future conditions within a specified timeframe.

Do costs align with work necessary to accomplish the project objectives?

Does the application describe a clear need?



Does applicant have the organizational capacity to implement the proposed project?

Are staff or consultants qualified to accomplish the proposed activities?

Are appropriate audiences engaged in the project?

How did/will engagement with local communities disproportionately impacted by climate change inform project?

Technical Design & Engineering

- How does the project address limiting factors in existing conservation or recovery plans?
- Was an alternative analysis completed that demonstrates a range of options were considered?
- Will appropriate data be collected to inform designs?
- Will professionally accepted technical or engineering approaches will be used?
- How are changing climate conditions incorporated & how will project contribute to durable adaptation & resilience for ecosystems?
- How has consideration of greenhouse gas emissions or long-term carbon sequestration or storage informed project?

Resource Assessment & Planning

- Is the project scope & scale feasible? Have the partners demonstrated the ability for collaborative work at this scale?
- Is the process by which data will be managed & shared with partners appropriate?
- Will professionally accepted methods & parameters will be used?
- How are changing climate conditions incorporated & how will project contribute to durable adaptation & resilience for ecosystems?
- How has consideration of greenhouse gas emissions or long-term carbon sequestration or storage informed project?

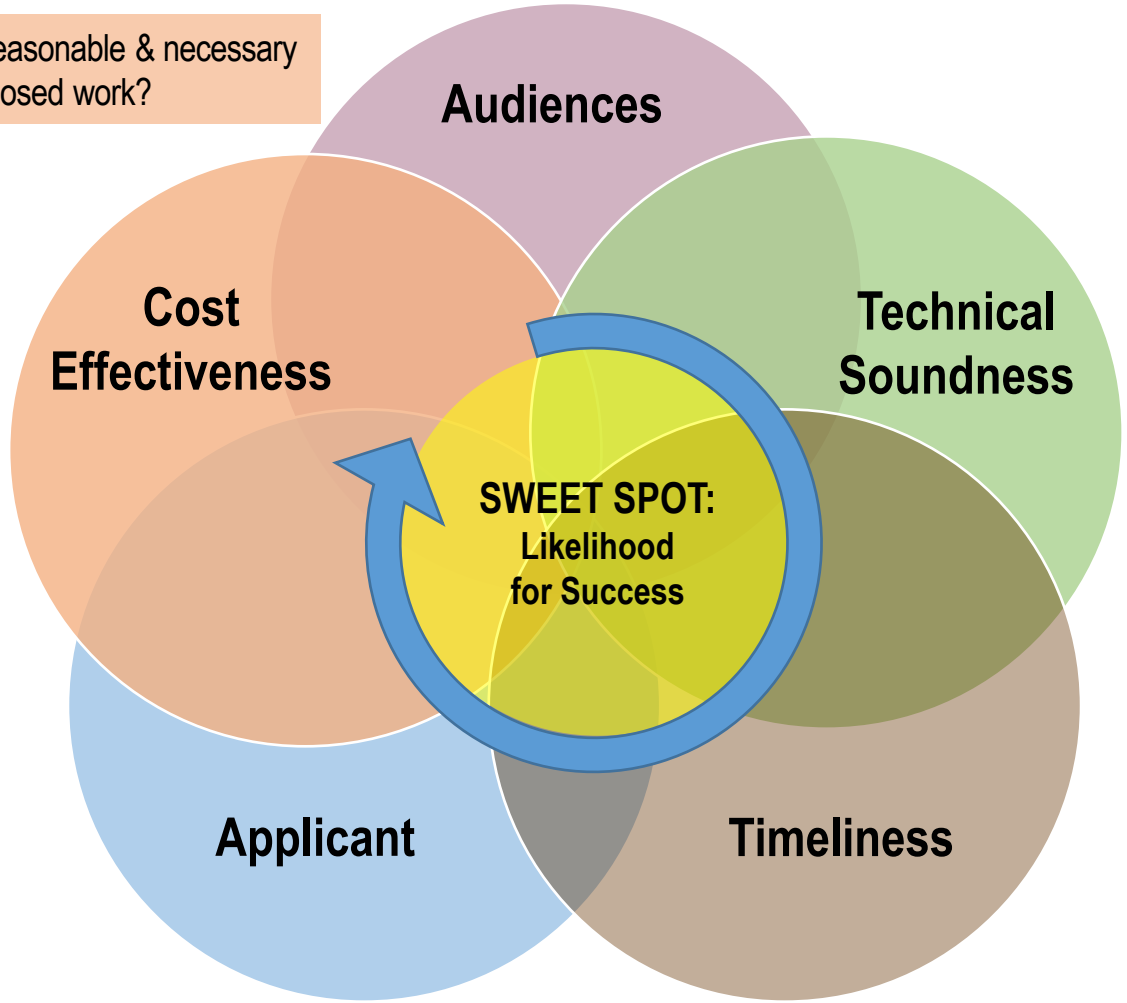
ENGAGEMENT

Evaluation Criteria
OAR 695-015-0070

"Engagement Project" means a project whose purpose is to communicate and engage with landowners, organizations and the community about the need for, feasibility, and benefit of a specific eligible restoration or acquisitions project or program that leads to development of eligible projects within an identified geography.

Projects whose primary purpose is education are NOT ELIGIBLE

Are costs reasonable & necessary for the proposed work?



How is the applicant qualified to implement the project? Do they have relevant experience?

Will engagement result in timely development of eligible restoration or acquisition projects or programs?

How will applicant engage with appropriate audiences in the appropriate geography?

How did/will engagement with local communities disproportionately impacted by climate change inform project?

How is the multi-directional communication among the applicant & audiences likely to be effective?

What is the evidence linking engagement to eligible restoration or acquisition projects or programs?

Will the outcomes of the expected restoration or acquisitions protect or restore fish or wildlife habitat, watershed function, &/or water quality or quantity?

How are changing climate conditions incorporated & how will project contribute to durable adaptation & resilience for ecosystems?

How has consideration of greenhouse gas emissions or long-term carbon sequestration or storage informed project?

MONITORING

Evaluation Criteria
OAR 695-025-0140

Purpose
Monitoring activities necessary for carrying out projects that protect or restore native fish or wildlife habitats, or protect or restore natural watershed or ecosystem functions to improve water quality or stream flows.

Eligibility

Projects that gather & analyze data to:

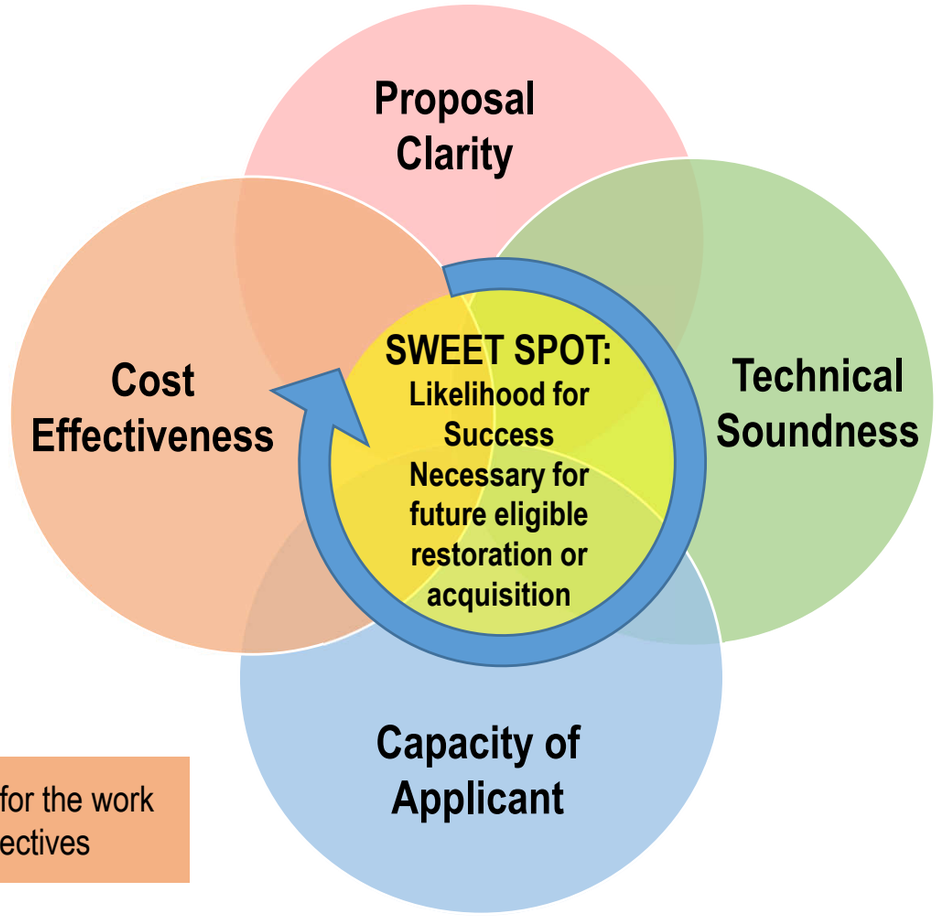
1. Describe current watershed conditions
2. Establish trends about watershed conditions
3. Evaluate the specific effects of a restoration or acquisition project

Monitoring relates to limiting factors, habitat conditions, watershed processes or actions described in local plans

Need, relevance, applicability, & timeliness of proposed monitoring to inform future projects

Complements existing data or current or planned monitoring efforts

Proposed costs are appropriate for the work necessary to accomplish the objectives



Monitoring questions & how proposed monitoring methods will answer these questions

Professionally accepted monitoring & analysis protocols, including quality assurance / quality control procedures to be utilized

Process by which data & results will be stored, reported, & made publicly available

Consideration of greenhouse gas emissions or long-term carbon sequestration or storage

Changing climate conditions incorporated; & contribution to durable adaptation & resilience for ecosystems

How the appropriate technical experts & community members are engaged

Organizational capacity relative to past experience & successful implementation of monitoring projects

Qualifications & ability of applicant technical staff, consultants, or project partners to apply appropriate monitoring approaches & data collection & analysis methods to successfully complete monitoring activities

Engages & applies input from local communities disproportionately impacted by climate change

RRT and Staff Funding Recommendations for the Fall 2024 Open Solicitation Grant Offering

Tables compare the number of projects recommended by each Regional Review Team (RRT) with projects recommended by Staff based on funds available in the 2023-2025 Spending Plan.

Restoration

Region	RRT	Staff	%
1	9	8	89%
2	9	5	56%
3	8	7	88%
4	2	2	100%
5	15	6	40%
6	8	8	100%
Total	**51**	**36**	**71%**

Technical Assistance

Region	RRT	Staff	%
1	5	4	80%
2	8	3	38%
3	4	4	100%
4	6	3	50%
5	2	2	100%
6	7	2	29%
Total	**32**	**18**	**56%**

Engagement

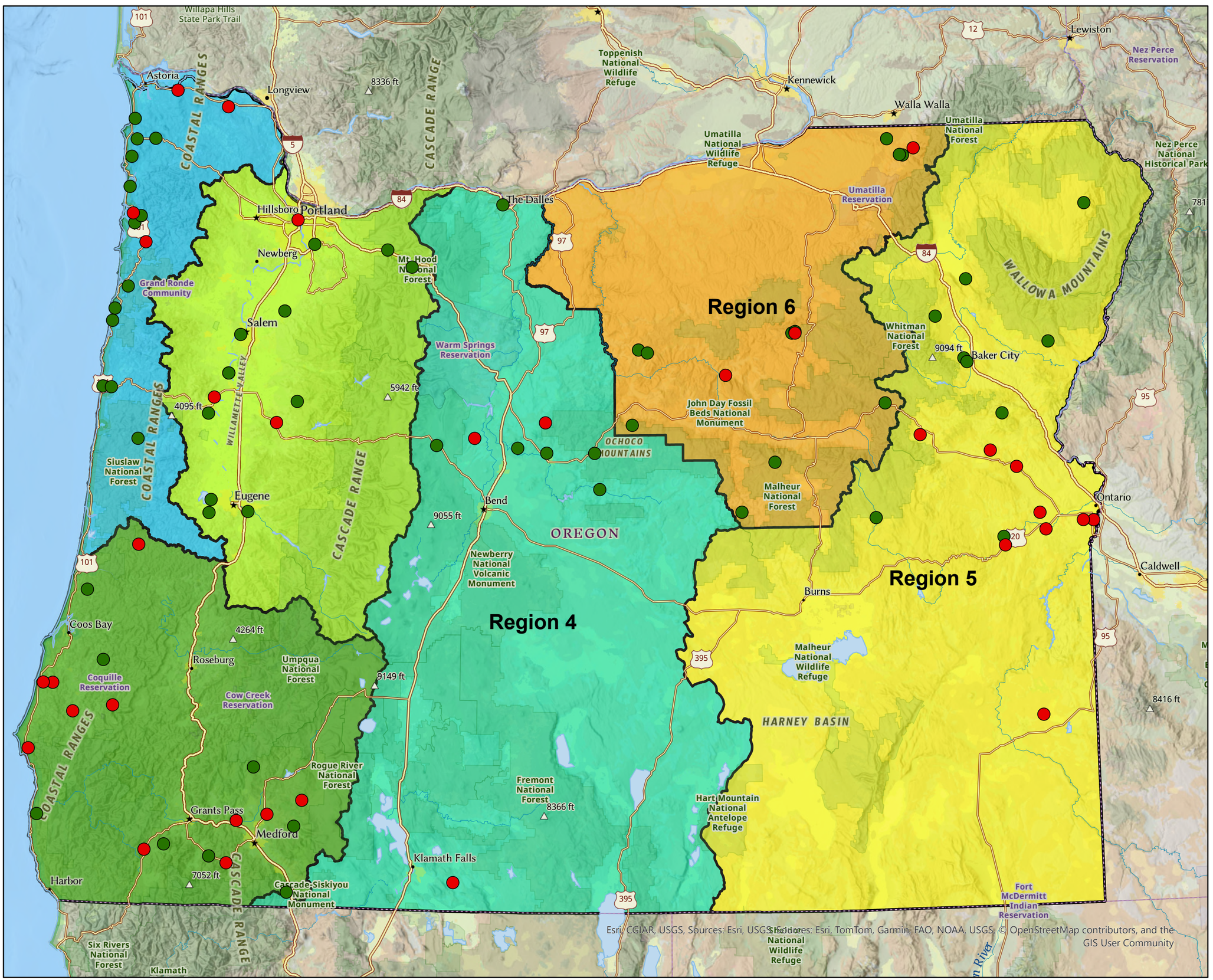
Region	RRT	Staff	%
1	2	1	50%
2	2	0	0%
3	3	1	33%
4	1	1	100%
5	1	1	100%
6	1	1	100%
Total	**10**	**5**	**50%**

Funding amounts are the totals for Staff Recommended projects

Region	Restoration	Technical Assistance	Engagement	Total
1	$ 1,282,643	$ 553,099	$ 42,248	**$ 1,877,990**
2	$ 1,770,243	$ 444,515	$ -	**$ 2,214,758**
3	$ 1,881,338	$ 370,538	$ 190,352	**$ 2,442,228**
4	$ 1,147,913	$ 887,365	$ 147,572	**$ 2,182,850**
5	$ 2,443,941	$ 155,330	$ 131,720	**$ 2,730,991**
6	$ 1,557,660	$ 261,910	$ 87,184	**$ 1,906,754**
Total	**$ 10,083,738**	**$ 2,672,757**	**$ 599,076**	**$ 13,355,571**

Item F. Attachment D

All Regions Fall 2024 Funding Recommendations



Fall 2024 Funding Recommendations Status

- Staff Recommended Funding
- Below Funding Line

OWEB Regions

- Region 1
- Region 2
- Region 3
- Region 4
- Region 5
- Region 6

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

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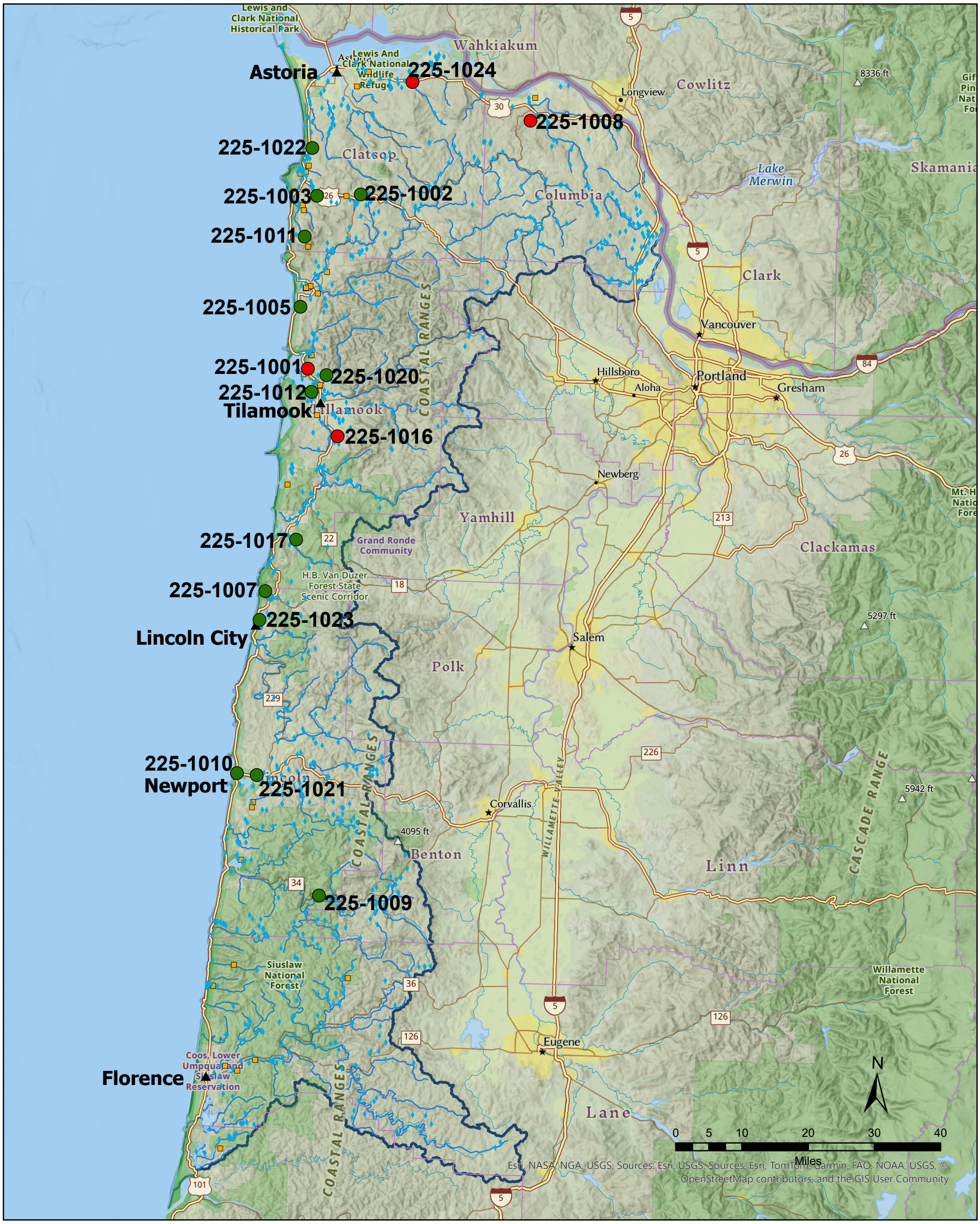
North Coast - Region 1 Fall 2024 Funding Recommendations



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Funding Recommendation

- Staff Recommendation For Funding (SRF)
- Below Funding Line (BFL)

Previous Grants 1998 - Spring 2024

- Land Acquisition
- Restoration
- Region 1 Cities
- Region 1 Streams
- OWEB Region 1 Boundary

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

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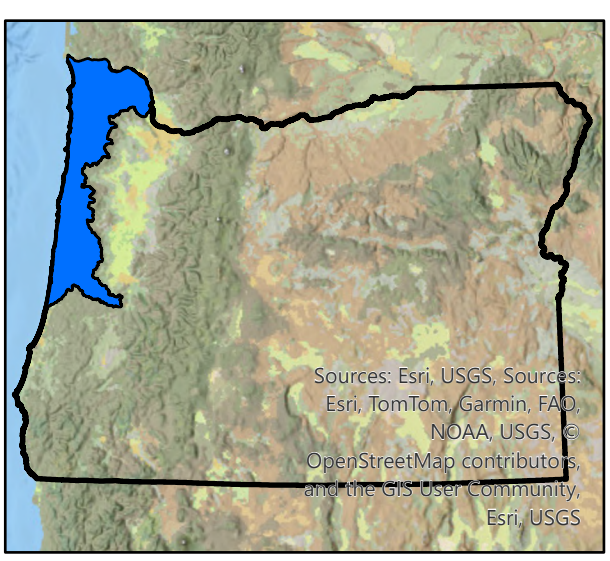

Region 1 - North Coast Restoration

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-1012	Tillamook Estuaries Partnership	Southern Flow Corridor Spruce Swamp Restoration: Planting & Maintenance	Address estuarine habitat quality by enhancing 15 acres of low-quality habitat in an area currently dominated by RCG to high-quality spruce swamp, and thereby increase estuarine habitat function for juvenile salmonids.	$ 71,285
225-1011	North Coast Land Conservancy	Rainforest Reserve Road Decommissioning Phase 1	The goal of phase one of the Rainforest Reserve Road Decommissioning Project is to reduce the impacts of the road network on water quality as well as restore riparian plant and animal communities. This will also create larger areas of contiguous forest as we manage the area toward a late seral forest condition. These road segments are not encumbered by access easements or located in the sensitive high elevation rock garden habitat that will be addressed in phase 2 of the project.	$ 169,355
225-1010	MidCoast WC	MCWC Log Salvage 2025-2028	With this Log Salvage Fund, MCWC will acquire and transport the quantity of logs needed for stream restoration projects on the Central Oregon Coast to meet the state or federal large wood benchmarks, address limiting factors for salmonids, and restore watershed processes.	$ 95,995
225-1009	MidCoast WC	Alsea Mainstem Riparian, Upland, and Wetland Swale Restoration	The Alsea Mainstem Riparian Restoration will restore 40 acres of habitat, improving water quality, lowering stream temperatures, and benefiting Oregon Coast coho, elk, deer, beaver, migratory birds, and other wildlife. This project aims to create a lasting restoration legacy, serving as a model and educational resource for neighbors and future generations, while enhancing riparian function, reducing summer water temperatures, and providing long-term sources of large woody debris.	$ 326,187
225-1002	Necanicum WC	Grindy Creek Tributary Fish Passage, LWD and Riparian Habitat Improvements	Removal of two fish passage barriers, LWD restoration, and riparian planting of native trees and shrubs in areas associated with culvert removals and where access routes are created for LWD placements.	$ 65,949
225-1005	Tillamook Estuaries Partnership	Jetty Creek Instream Restoration	This project will improve salmonid habitat in Jetty Creek by installing 14 large wood structures that span the width of the channel. This will increase habitat complexity, and over time, create pools and sort gravel to from ideal spawning and overwintering habitat in 0.7 miles of Jetty Creek.	$ 83,194
225-1003	Necanicum WC	Johnson Creek Fish Passage, LWD and Habitat Enhancement	The goals of this project are to improve access to approximately 3 miles of fish habitat in Johnson Creek by removing fill consisting of a failing and rusted out 7' culvert on a 13' bankfull width average stream. Then, we will recreate the natural stream grade and bankfull width and a prefabricated bridge will be installed. A riparian planting and large woody debris structure placement will be conducted afterwards to increase stream complexity.	$ 215,034
225-1007	Institute for Applied Ecology	Coastal Prairie Restoration at Westwind	The goal of this project is to restore 11 acres of rare, remnant coastal prairie to create habitat for the federally threatened Oregon silverspot butterfly and protect existing rare species.	$ 255,644
Total Restoration Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 1,282,643**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
225-1008	Columbia SWCD	Conyers Creek Habitat Diversification and Enhancement	The immediate goal of this project is restore planform and in-stream complexity to this reach of Conyers Creek, thereby increasing and enhancing spawning and rearing habitat for native species of salmon and lamprey. Proposed restoration actions will catalyze natural processes transforming this reach of Conyers into a morphologically complex system capable of supporting greater salmon production while providing benefits to a multitude of other wildlife species.	$ 516,625

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT			
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Amount Requested**
225-1001	City of Bay City	Patterson Creek Phase 2 Culvert Replacement	$ 908,558
225-1006	Lower Nehalem WC	Salmonberry Confluence Cold Water Habitat Enhancement	$ 685,214
225-1013	North Coast WS Assn	ECFR Beaver Community Building!	$ 131,878

Region 1 - North Coast Technical Assistance

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-1021	MidCoast WC	Beaver Creek Floodplain Restoration Design	This project will develop designs to restore stream and floodplain function on two properties in the Beaver Creek (Yaquina basin), addressing the primary limiting factors for listed coho salmon: reduced stream complexity and water quality and also address the secondary limiting factor of stream complexity. Our vision for these two properties is a restored channel network that has complex, cool instream habitat and floodplain connectivity, building resilience in a changing climate.	$ 92,928
225-1017	Trout Unlimited Inc	Irish Culvert Priority Fish Restoration Designs	The goal of the proposed project is to restore access to valuable instream, cold-water habitat which in turn will increase recruitment and population size for at least three species of native fish including ESA listed Coho Salmon. In addition to restoring fish passage, this project would also restore natural stream function and reduce erosion and sedimentation. Technical assistance will allow design development for a new crossing meeting landowner, permitting, and fish passage requirements.	$ 122,568
225-1020	The Nature Conservancy	Kilchis Watershed Functional Assessment	Evaluate factors contributing to altered hydrologic and other ecosystem functions in the Kilchis River Watershed that are negatively affecting ecological function, flooding and water supply and recommend site-specific restoration options or other remedies to alleviate these concerns.	$ 150,000
225-1022	Necanicum WC	Thompson Creek Technical Assistance Phase I	The Phase I TA proposal for Thompson Creek will address the following: 1. Assess the current conditions of the system and the conditions of potential relocation or restoration sites. 2. Conduct necessary surveying and stakeholder engagement to produce an alternatives analysis of the system. 3. Provide the necessary information for partners and stakeholders to identify, and later pursue, a preferred alternative that satisfies ecological, economic, and community needs.	$ 187,603
Total Technical Assistance Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 553,099**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
225-1016	Tillamook Estuaries Partnership	Mary's Creek Final Engineering & Design	The goal of the Technical Assistance is to complete 100% design, permitting, and bid documents development that will enable TEP to seek funding for the construction phase of the project.	$ 145,830

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT			
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Amount Requested**
225-1015	Tillamook Estuaries Partnership	Tuffy Creek Fish Passage - Building Resilience in a Changing Climate	$ 339,854
225-1018	Lower Nehalem WC	Gallagher Slough Tidal Wetland Enhancements	$ 148,319
225-1019	Scappoose Bay WC	South Scappoose and Raymond Creek Confluence Floodplain Design	$ 86,922

Region 1 - North Coast Engagement

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order				
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Project Goal (From Application)**	**Amount Recommended**
225-1023	Institute for Applied Ecology	Coastal Native Plant Materials Engagement to Improve Restoration Outcomes	Develop and implement an Engagement Plan for the Coastal Native Seed Partnership that will result in native seed mix design, restoration, and grower resources to synergize current and future restoration and production efforts and improve efficiency of projects on the Oregon coast.	$ 42,248
Total Engagement Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 42,248**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order				
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Project Goal (From Application)**	**Amount Requested**
225-1024	North Coast WS Assn	Big Creek Watershed Restoration Charrette	The goal for the Big Creek, Little Creek Restoration Design Project is to engage landowners and facility managers and develop design concepts that are acceptable to the community and responsive to chum salmon needs and can be implemented with further design work. Securing stakeholder buy-in is critical as restoration efforts will occur on private property and require full informed consent and collaboration for successful implementation.	$ 114,378

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT			
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Amount Requested**
N/A			

Region 1 Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$1,877,990**
Region 1 - 6 Grand Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$13,355,571**

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1001-23902
Project Name: Patterson Creek Phase 2 Culvert Replacement
Applicant: City of Bay City
Region: North Coast
OWEB Request: $908,558

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Tillamook
Total Cost: $1,983,758

Application Description This project will eliminate barriers and restore habitat for fish passage along over 300' of Patterson Creek, which runs through Bay City and feeds into Tillamook Bay. The current project is between 5th Street and 9th Street, in Bay City. 2) Fish passage is impaired along this fish-bearing stream. One culvert is a temporary culvert, and is undersized. The other culvert is undersized and failing. 3) The project would replace a 48” culvert installed under emergency authorization with an open bottom box culvert on 7th Street; remove a failing culvert on 8th Street and restore the open channel; and perform enhancement and restoration on the whole length of Patterson Creek. We have worked with Tillamook Estuaries Partnership and ODFW on this project in the past. We are currently working with the private property owners along the creek, TEP, Century West Engineering, as well as Habitat Concepts, TEP Native Plant Nursery, and the Tillamook Beekeepers Association for our habitat restoration activities. We will also use City staff and volunteers in our restoration activities.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application clearly articulates a need to restore fish passage on Patterson Creek. The road crossings slated for replacement and removal are severely undersized and limiting fish passage.

- The designs incorporate a plan to re-route a Bay City road and eliminate one of the crossings. This solution will maximize the possible ecological benefit of the project.

- Restoring fish passage on Patterson Creek will restore access to one mile of Oregon coast coho salmon habitat and 8 miles of cutthroat trout habitat, provided all the barriers can be addressed.

- The proposed project will build off a previously completed project at 2nd Street within the City.

- The applicant has involved local partners to assist with riparian revegetation. Community support for the project is evident in the application by the included support letters.

- The City has the relevant design, construction, and contracting experience to complete a road removal and culvert replacement project.

- The City is clearly committed to the project and has been adept in pursuing funding for implementation. The applicant is looking to leverage a loan they received from DEQ that has helped fund the project designs and they have applied for other grants to build the funding package necessary to achieve the proposed outcomes.

Concerns

- Patterson Creek is significantly constrained in its lower reach by urban infrastructure. There is a major fish passage barrier just upstream of the project area on 9th Street and the plans to address this site are unclear.

- There are 3 additional barriers upstream on Oregon Department of Forestry property that are limiting fish passage, but are not planned to be addressed. Fish passage benefits from the project will be limited if these upstream barriers are not addressed in addition to the barrier at 9th Street.

- Project actions include bank stabilization that will likely have limited fish habitat benefits by treating a site-specific symptom of watershed disturbance over causes. It is unclear how placing rip rap will provide ecological benefit to fish and aquatic habitats in Patterson Creek.

- The budget narrative is unclear and lacks information needed to understand how much is budgeted for city infrastructure versus fish habitat.

- The proposed actions lack detail needed to understand whether the project is ready to implement or whether significant changes will be needed at 100% designs. Final designs are underway and not included with the application, information on the design process still to occur would be helpful in determining project readiness.

- The species selected for revegetation of the riparian area may not be site appropriate.

- The project is costly due to the need to work around City infrastructure, including moving water and sewer lines. The budget does not provide enough detail to understand how the costs are estimated and evaluate whether costs are reasonable and necessary to implement the proposed actions .

Concluding Analysis

Patterson Creek is an important tributary to Tillamook Bay and restoring fish passage will be beneficial to populations of anadromous fish species, including Oregon coast coho salmon. The stream is constrained considerably in its lower reaches by a series of barriers at multiple road crossings through the urban area of the City of Bay City. The City's commitment to accomplishing the project is clear. The ecological benefit, however, is low for the cost of the project. Without addressing the 9th Street barrier, the project will result in restoring access to only 0.1 mile of aquatic habitat.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

n/a

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1002-23930
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Grindy Creek Tributary Fish Passage, LWD and Riparian Habitat Improvements
Applicant: Necanicum WC
Region: North Coast
County: Clatsop
OWEB Request: $65,949
Total Cost: $85,949

Application Description 1) Grindy Creek is a salmon, steelhead and bull trout stream (SSBT) that supports ESA-listed Coho Salmon, located at the base of Saddle Mountain near Highway 26. Access to approximately 1.5 miles of upstream fish habitat on a medium SSBT stream and 0.2 miles on a small fish tributary to Grindy Creek will be improved with the removal of two undersized and failing culverts and the two abandoned roads on top of them, totaling approximately 774 cubic yards of fill.

2) In partnership with Nuveen Natural Capital, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Chinook Indian Nation, the Necanicum Watershed Council identified two fish passage barriers on tributaries to Grindy Creek that, when removed, will highly improve access to upstream habitats. The first fish barrier (NEC-93) has an inlet and outlet rusted out 5' foot pipe in a 10½' stream with high failure risk. With the removal of this fish passage barrier and the abandoned road on top of the culvert, we will improve access to 1.5 miles of fish habitat upstream. The second partial velocity barrier (NEC-92) is a 3' culvert at 4% gradient in a 4' stream at 8% gradient and an abandoned road. There is 0.2 miles of fish habitat upstream that could be benefited by the removal of 362 cubic yards of fill from this location.

3) We propose to remove two undersized culverts and conduct full decommission of two harvest roads to improve access to 1.7 miles of upstream fish habitat. We will do a large planting of willow, salmonberry, huckleberry and red cedar along the streambanks to improve soil quality and water temperature for fish along the stream. Together with ODFW, we also identified 14 LWD placement locations in the larger tributary to Grindy Creek, which will increase instream habitat complexity and salmonid rearing and spawning habitat.

4) Necanicum Watershed Council
Nuveen Natural Capital/Lewis and Clark Timberlands
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Chinook Indian Nation

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project will address two fish passage barriers, providing access to 1.7 miles of aquatic habitat. Large wood placements will also improve instream habitat complexity, a key limiting factor for fish in this basin.

- Grindy Creek is a productive Oregon coast coho salmon stream in the Necanicum watershed. The proposed restoration work will improve spawning and rearing habitat for coho and other salmonids.

- The project is ready to implement this summer and fits within a multi-year restoration plan for the area.

- The project objectives and implementation actions are clearly stated within the application.

- The project is indicative of an effective partnership between the applicant and private timber landowner. The project team has the experience and capacity necessary to implement a successful project. Project partners include ODFW, the Chinook Indian Nation, and Nuveen Capital. The distribution of project tasks between the team is well described in the application.

- The Chinook Indian Nation is engaged in the project and providing assistance developing the planting plan, which will have a focus on first foods.

- The costs for the proposed actions are reasonable for the expected watershed benefit.

Concerns

- The description in the application narrative for the approach to decommissioning the road is limited in detail. Information about proposed grading, slope ratios, and fill removal would be helpful in understanding the expected benefits of the actions.

- The permitting process may not allow for a nexus for an incidental take permit, which could make implementation and fish salvage more complicated.

- The timeline for the planting and invasive species monitoring is unclear, with monitoring listed as an activity in 2024 and riparian streambank planting in 2025. The sequencing in the application isn’t explained.

- It is unclear if the Chinook Indian Nation can participate in assisting with planting actions as described in the application because there is no compensation listed in the budget or a letter of partner support.

Concluding Analysis

Grindy Creek is a tributary of the Necanicum River and is a priority place to improve habitat for ESA-listed Oregon coast coho salmon, Winter Steelhead, Coastal Cutthroat Trout and Pacific lamprey. Fish passage barriers limit access to quality habitats critical to meet life-cycle requirements. Grindy Creek is low gradient and expected to respond favorably to the placement of large wood, addressing a key limiting factor in the watershed by improving instream habitat complexity. The proposed project is likely to succeed in improving fish passage and increasing aquatic and riparian habitat complexity in the Grindy Creek watershed.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

5 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$65,949

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$65,949

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1003-23931
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Johnson Creek Fish Passage, LWD and Habitat Enhancement
Applicant: Necanicum WC
Region: North Coast
County: Clatsop
OWEB Request: $215,034
Total Cost: $280,422

Application Description 1) Johnson Creek is a medium SSBT (salmon, steelhead and bull trout) stream of the Necanicum River that supports ESA-listed Coho salmon according to surveys conducted by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Near Highway 26, there is a rusted out and undersized culvert with high risk of collapsing on Johnson Creek that does not meet ODFW fish passage criteria. The removal of this barrier and installation of a new bridge will improve access to approximately 3 miles of fish habitat upstream and downstream.

2) In partnership with Nuveen Natural Capital, adjacent landowners, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Chinook Indian Nation, the Necanicum Watershed Council aims to address a collapsing and undersized culvert that is creating a fish passage barrier on the main road crossing and adjacent to Johnson Creek and the lack of complex stream habitat. The fish passage barrier removal will improve access to approximately 3 miles of productive fish habitat, and the installation of a bridge will serve the local community by improving access to their land in combination with a crossing that meets ODFW fish passage criteria.

3) With this project we aim to remove the undersized and rusted out culvert and road and replace with a new bridge, following environmental engineering consultation. We will revegetate the riparian zone and place large woody debris near the bridge area. Afterwards, we will place large woody debris in 12 locations over approximately 0.5 miles of Johnson Creek upstream of the new bridge crossing to improve instream habitat complexity.

4) Nuveen Natural Capital/Lewis & Clark Timberlands
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Chinook Indian Nation

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Johnson Creek supports populations of Oregon coast coho salmon, steelhead, and lamprey. The project will improve passage to 3 stream miles and habitat for these species as well as other aquatic organisms.

- The proposed design will achieve the maximum fish passage benefit possible by replacing an undersized culvert with a channel spanning bridge. The designs for large wood placement are also technically sound and will improve instream habitat complexity upstream of the crossing.

- The application clearly describes why the project is needed and provides evidence of project readiness. The project partners have completed designs and planning for the instream wood project component and design is underway for the culvert replacement.

- There is an effective partnership between the applicant and the private timber landowner. The landowner is donating the trees to the project needed for the large wood placements, ensuring a nearby reliable source of trees.

- The project team has the capacity and experience necessary to implement the project, and a steady track record implementing other similar projects in the watershed. The Chinook Indian Nation is engaged in the project and providing technical expertise.

- The project is cost-effective for the expected watershed benefit. Passage will be restored for aquatic organisms to 3 miles of stream habitat, and habitat complexity improved with large wood placement on a half mile of the stream reach.

Concerns

- There is a culvert just downstream of the project area under a private driveway crossing that may be a velocity barrier for fish at some flows. The application does not describe plans for addressing the structure, the potential ramifications to that culvert of placing large wood upstream, or what engagement with that landowner has occurred to date.

- Detail describing how alternatives were identified and evaluated is limited in the application. More details is needed to clarify the rationale behind the selected alternative.

- The culvert slated for replacement with a bridge is located on a right-of-way owned by a timber company, limiting the possible footprint of restoration actions around the stream crossing.

Concluding Analysis

Johnson Creek is a tributary of the Necanicum River and is a priority place to restore habitat for Oregon coast coho salmon as well as other aquatic organisms. Stream surveys completed indicate Coho and steelhead are already present in Johnson Creek. The project will provide fish access to 3 miles of spawning and rearing habitat that will be improved by placing large wood to increase instream habitat complexity.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

7 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$215,034

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$215,034

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1005-23960
Project Name: Jetty Creek Instream Restoration
Applicant: Tillamook Estuaries Partnership
Region: North Coast
OWEB Request: $86,904

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Tillamook
Total Cost: $118,394

Application Description Jetty Creek is situated just upstream from the Nehalem River's mouth, about 3 miles north of Rockaway Beach in Tillamook County. The stream is home to ESA-listed coho salmon, chum salmon, and coastal cutthroat trout. Most of the Jetty Creek watershed is designated for private timber management and serves as the primary drinking water source for Rockaway Beach. Currently, Jetty Creek falls short of ODFW benchmarks for instream large wood. Additionally, juvenile fish face challenges overwintering in Jetty Creek due to its simplified channel and gradient. Large wood placements will provide overwintering habitat and stream complexity for juvenile salmonids.

This project is collaborating with Lewis and Clark Timberlands (part of Nuveen Capital Group) to enhance stream function and improve salmonid habitat by installing 14 large wood structures that span the full channel. The Tillamook Estuaries Partnership will manage the project, facilitate partner communication, oversee the implementation of large wood placements, and handle project grants and scheduling. Lewis and Clark Timberlands will supply all the necessary wood for the project. TEP will hire an experienced contractor to construct the large wood placements. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Fish Habitat Restoration Biologist will provide technical assistance for the project design and wood placement. Since the project is located on industrial timber land, only the Oregon Department of Forestry Notification of Operations, SHPO 106 (required by OWEB) and Tillamook County's approval of the Land Use Compatibility Statement form are required as permits.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Jetty Creek is a key tributary of the Nehalem estuary to restore habitat for Oregon coast coho salmon, as it is the nearest tributary to the Nehalem River's confluence with the ocean. Placing large wood in the stream will address a limiting factor by improving instream habitat complexity and providing additional rearing habitat. Juvenile fish rearing in the creek are regularly washed downstream into the estuary prematurely during high water events due to the lack of large wood to provide shelter.

- The approach and selected locations for large wood placement are technically sound.

- The stream and project are identified in the Nehalem Strategic Action Plan for Coho as a priority. The applicant is partnering with other organizations in the Nehalem Basin Partnership to increase local capacity in the area to implement restoration.

- The applicant and project team have the necessary capacity and experience to implement the project as proposed.

- The City of Rockaway Beach plans to acquire the Jetty Creek watershed, including the project reach, to protect the City's drinking water source. A city council member attended the site visit and provided support for the project.

- The costs are reasonable for the expected ecological benefit and the budget is appropriately detailed.

Concerns

- No planting actions are described in the application; planting riparian areas disturbed during large wood placement would minimize impacts from project implementation.

Concluding Analysis

Jetty Creek is a key tributary of the Nehalem estuary and this project will build on previous OWEB investments. A decade ago, an OWEB-funded Restoration grant restored fish passage to the creek at the site of Rockaway Beach's water intake. Fish populations have rebounded in the creek and this project will improve stream conditions these fish access by addressing a key limiting factor of habitat complexity.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

6 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$86,904

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund Reduced

Staff Recommended Amount

$83,194

Staff Conditions

The award is reduced to meet 10% de minimis policy.

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1006-23974
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Salmonberry Confluence Cold Water Habitat Enhancement
Applicant: Lower Nehalem WC
Region: North Coast
County: Tillamook
OWEB Request: $685,214
Total Cost: $1,334,426

Application Description This project is a priority of the Nehalem Basin Partnership and is listed in the Nehalem Strategic Action Plan for Coho.

The project is located at the confluence of the Salmonberry River with the Nehalem, a high priority cool water tributary confluence within the Nehalem River watershed. The project goal is to take the project from 60% design through implementation including construction ready designs, permitting, and implementation. The project proposes to install engineered large wood structures to restore salmonid habitat complexity at a priority cool water tributary junction with the mainstem Nehalem River.
During the Nehalem Bay Watershed Council's (NBWC) 2018 Rapid Bio-assessment Assessment channel surveys, the Salmonberry River was identified as high priority cold water refugia. This confluence zone provides refuge from the high temperatures in the mainstem Nehalem River, but juvenile fish are holding at pools that are completely devoid of any complexity or cover, making them susceptible to increased predation. The NBWC will maintain a contract with a qualified engineering firm to develop the project's construction ready designs, acquire required permits, and implement the project while continuing to convene partners to participate in design review and evaluation.

OWEB funds will be used to support: project management, engineering design services to prepare construction ready designs, acquire permits, contract a construction firm, and implement the projects in 2026. Project partners include Wild Salmon Center, the National Fish and Wildlife Fund, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Oregon Department of Forestry, NOAA Fisheries, Tillamook Public Works, Nehalem Basin Partnership, and Tillamook Estuaries Partnership.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Habitat complexity and cover for juvenile fish in the mainstem Nehalem River is uncommon. The proposed project will address these watershed limiting factors by installing engineered large wood in the mainstem and within Salmonberry River, a major tributary to Nehalem River.

- The Salmonberry River provides critical cold water refugia in the Nehalem watershed, which is documented by temperature monitoring data that has been ongoing since 2009. The project has been designed to maximize the benefits of the cold-water plume that enters the mainstem Nehalem from the Salmonberry. Thermal drone imaging was utilized to identify optimum locations for placing the proposed structures.

- An experienced engineering team developed technically sound designs that are equipped to handle the flows of the mainstem Nehalem and Salmonberry rivers as well as account for the recreational use in the area. The mechanical anchoring that is proposed will ensure the structures remain in place and function to retain gravel in the system.

- The instream structures will provide critical cold water refugia throughout the summer low-flow periods when water temperatures are high as well as provided important habitat complexity during other fish life stages. The structures in the Salmonberry River will help attract juveniles to colder water.

- The selected project location is optimum for demonstrating the proposed novel approach to mainstem wood and could serve as an outreach opportunity due to its visibility for recreational users. Design options are limited due to high energy flows. As a result, artificial fasteners will be used to secure critical log structures until gravel and debris accumulates and stream complexity is restored. Similar structures have been used in Washington and the proposed project provides a proof of concept opportunity in Oregon.

- The project team has the necessary expertise and capacity to implement a successful project. Support from the landowner located at the confluence is demonstrated by participation in the application review site visit and past engagement in the design process.

Concerns

- The applicant is encouraged to incorporate a detailed monitoring plan to track long-term effectiveness of the unique approach for placing large wood structure that includes control sites, measurements of gravel aggradation, and hydrologic monitoring. Given the pilot nature of this project and the lack of other mainstem complexity projects in Oregon, a comprehensive monitoring plan is essential to inform future restoration and test the efficacy of the design.

- The application indicates the lack of large wood cover in the project area is increasing rates of predation pressure on juvenile fish. The only evidence provided is surveys where fish were present in July and then absent in August. This is not a scientifically sound inference given that fish constantly migrate throughout a watershed.

- The cost of the project is high compared to other similar instream projects in Washington. The ecological benefit described in the application may be overstated. The extent to which the number of large wood structures proposed will positively affect fish populations may be limited for the project cost.

- The highly engineered and experimental technique prescribed to install wood structures include boulder collars that will use a chain between two rocks to strap logs into place to ballast structures and anchoring structures using steel rods that are drilled into bedrock. There is no long-term plan for removing the metal infrastructure that will be used to secure large wood from the river after the wood degrades.

- The density of the wood pieces proposed is technically sound, but the prescribed wood dimensions may be undersized for the volume of water flow in the river. Increasing the size of the wood length and adding more ballasts before anchoring the structures to the bedrock may more closely mimic natural stream processes. Placing fewer structures and adding more pieces to each structure may also help mitigate the need for some of the anchoring.

Concluding Analysis

The confluence of the Salmonberry and Nehalem rivers is a priority location to restore habitat complexity for juvenile fish; the lethal summer temperatures in the mainstem Nehalem creates a need for juvenile fish to access cooler water. Two OWEB Technical Assistance grants were awarded to develop the complex designs needed to install large wood in an area of the watershed with high energy stream flows, but the wood structure placement method may not be cost effective for the expected habitat gains. Without including plans to remove metal anchoring materials and monitoring that documents the effectiveness of this novel approach in achieving restoration goals, it is unclear if the ecological benefit will be sufficient to justify the high cost of the project.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

n/a

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1007-23976
Project Name: Coastal Prairie Restoration at Westwind
Applicant: Institute for Applied Ecology
Region: North Coast
OWEB Request: $255,644

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Lincoln
Total Cost: $324,712

Application Description The goal of this project is to restore 11 acres of coastal prairie to protect existing populations of rare flora and create habitat for the federally threatened Oregon silverspot butterfly (OSB). The coastal prairies are owned by the Westwind Stewardship Group (Westwind) and are located on the Oregon coast approximately five miles north of downtown Lincoln City.

Westwind has two coastal prairies: Iris Meadow and Fraser Farm. Iris Meadow is a pristine, four-acre coastal prairie that has substantial native plant abundance and supports a diverse mix of coastal species not commonly found in other prairies. Iris Meadow is a critical seed source for the Fraser Farm component of this project and other coastal prairie projects. Shrub and fir encroachment along with non-native grasses threaten the native plant community at Iris Meadow and could have devastating impacts if restoration actions do not intervene. Fraser Farm is a seven-acre degraded pasture directly southeast of Cascade Head which hosts OSB. Restoration has begun to transform the pasture into coastal prairie capable of supporting OSB. The area is currently fallowed , with plans to be seeded in fall 2025. Additional seeding and plantings are needed along with regular weed abatement actions to establish the prairie.

As coastal prairies decline, Fraser Farm provides a rare opportunity to restore seven acres within close proximity to an extant OSB population (Cascade Head) and a venue to educate future generations of Oregonians (campers at Camp Westwind) about conservation, wildlife, and stewardship.

To restore Iris Meadow and Fraser Farm we propose to use an integrated pest management approach to treat invasive species and problematic weeds. Specific methods include manual (hand pulling), mechanical (mowing, sawing), chemical (spot herbicide application), and thermal (flame weeding) treatments. Following treatments, native species, particularly OSB host and nectar species will be planted in open spaces.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Coastal prairie is a declining habitat type on the coast and is a priority for restoration. The proposed actions will restore habitat that could be utilized by the federally listed Oregon silverspot butterfly and several rare and sensitive plants.

- The proposed restoration will occur on a property that is encumbered by a conservation easement held by OWEB, which will ensure long-term protection and maintenance of investments in habitat restoration. The restoration also builds off an OWEB-funded Technical Assistance grant that produced a design for the proposed restoration.

- The remnant coastal prairie habitat currently present within the Iris Meadow site is rare and imperiled from encroaching woody vegetation. The need for restoration here is urgent to preserve the rare flora occupying the meadow.

- The project focuses on limiting factors affecting native vegetation desirable for wildlife by controlling nonnative grass species and reducing encroaching woody vegetation.

- The timeline for implementation is detailed and appropriate. The method and approach proposed have proven to be successful in other locations on the coast, including the nearby Nestucca Bay Wildlife Refuge.

- The applicant has shown ingenuity with their approach to build capacity for increasing the availability of native seed necessary for restoring Oregon coastal prairies. Previous project evaluation concerns related to the approach for acquiring native seed are addressed by clarifying that the seed grown and purchased with the project funds will be utilized at the project site.

- Concerns from the previous evaluation about plant stewardship have been addressed by adding three years of weed treatment by the project team.

- Westwind is committed to restoring and protecting the rare habitats on the property and there is the capacity among the project team to implement and steward a successful project.

- The project is cost-effective for the expected ecological benefit of 11 acres of coastal prairie habitat.

Concerns

- Coastal prairie habitat is an early successional habitat that is normally maintained by natural disturbances. The Fraser Farm site may not have historically had early successional habitat present that would lead to ideal conditions today for establishing coastal prairie plant communities. Also, it may be challenging to establish coastal prairie due to soil conditions that have resulted from previous farm uses, including decades of pasture management for livestock. It may be worth the investment, however, because there are limited opportunities to establish this declining habitat type.

Concluding Analysis

Coastal prairie habitat on the Oregon coast has been significantly reduced from its pre-colonization extent and much of the associated flora and fauna is imperiled. The project will protect and restore some of that rare habitat on two locations within Camp Westwind, a property stewarded by the nonprofit Westwind Stewardship Group. The Iris Meadow site is of great ecological importance, containing some of the last remaining coastal prairie habitat in the region. The Fraser Farm site is lower in elevation and while it has been altered from its natural condition by anthropogenic uses, it has the potential to support coastal prairie with appropriate planning and stewardship. The project team and landowner are committed to the success of the restoration and have planned appropriately for stewardship and maintenance into the future.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

8 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$255,644

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$255,644

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1008-23978
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Conyers Creek Habitat Diversification and Enhancement
Applicant: Columbia SWCD
Region: North Coast
County: Columbia
OWEB Request: $516,625
Total Cost: $742,775

Application Description 1) Project Location: Conyers Creek in Clatskanie, OR. (GPS: 46.08805, -123.21805)
2) Conyers Creek is a tributary of the Clatskanie River (a Conservation Opportunity Area). Conyers is habitat to several ESA-listed species including Lower Columbia River Coho, Lower Columbia River - Washington DPS Steelhead, and Lower Columbia River Chinook. Other species of concern inhabiting Conyers include Coastal cutthroat trout and Pacific lamprey. ODFW is currently reintroducing Chum to several Clatskanie River tributaries, including Conyers Creek. Recovery plans identify lack of overwintering habitat as the primary tributary limiting factor for the Lower Columbia River watershed. Over time, activities including road building, residential development, farming and logging practices have resulted in the degradation and simplification of Conyers Creek. Surveys and assessments of Conyers note a lack of complex pools and large wood and a need for riparian restoration.
3) This project will create and restore quality spawning and rearing habitat in Conyers Creek by accomplishing the following objectives: 1) Re-engaging a side channel historically occupied by Roaring Creek, 2) Creating off-channel habitat in the form of alcoves and more frequent floodplain engagement, 3) Encouraging pool development and adding complexity to existing pools through large wood installation, 4) Installing beaver dam analogues in Roaring Creek and an off-channel area; 5) Replanting floodplain areas with willows and other desirable forage species to encourage beaver activity, and 6) Improving water quality through drain tile removal, upland wetland enhancement, and installation of large wood structures along sensitive banks.
4) Project partners include: Natural Resource Conservation Service, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Private landowners.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Improving stream complexity will address important limiting factors for numerous species of fish, including Columbia River coho salmon, steelhead, Chinook, cutthroat trout, and lamprey. Conyers Creek is a tributary of the Clatskanie River, which is a priority location for restoration to recover salmon populations in the Lower Columbia watershed.

- Off-channel and side channel habitat will be restored through the project. These instream habitat types are particularly important in manipulated systems where stream channels tend to be oversimplified.

- The technical approach is sound, and 60% designs have been completed. The project builds on a previous OWEB-funded Technical Assistance grant. The engineering team has experience with similar successful projects.

- The adaptive approach to restoring the plant community and addressing invasive species is technically sound and likely to succeed. Monitoring changes to hydrology after implementing stream restoration and before addressing reed canary grass and installing plantings will align revegetation actions with site conditions.

- Addressing the historic field drainage in the downstream site will limit pollutants to the stream. The project overall is likely to have positive benefits to the water quality in Conyers Creek.

- The project team has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project. The applicant has established positive relationships with willing landowners throughout the project reach. Working on private land in this part of the watershed is essential for the recovery of Columbia River salmon.

- The landowners are supportive and engaged in the restoration project. There is also potential for outreach to occur that could be a catalyst for similar restoration in the future along the creek.

- The application addressed previous concerns by improving the description of the design for beaver dam analogues, adding detail in the budget, and providing specifications of the proposed wood material to be utilized.

Concerns

- The cost has been reduced from the previous application, but the overall costs for the expected ecological benefit are still high. The costs for the wood material obtained on the landowner's property continue to be higher than other similar projects.

Concluding Analysis

Conyers Creek provides important habitat for Columbia River salmon and this project will improve habitat for these species by adding pools, slowing water velocities, and increasing spawning gravels in this tributary of the Clatksanie River. This application is a resubmit with a previous application

recommended for funding but falling below the staff-recommended funding line, and the applicant addressed some of the concerns of the previous review thoughtfully. The cost of the project is high due to the site constraints from the rural residential area, but the project is likely to be implemented successfully.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

9 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$516,625

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1009-23984

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Alsea Mainstem Riparian, Upland, and Wetland Swale Restoration

Applicant: MidCoast WC

Region: North Coast

County: Lincoln

OWEB Request: $326,187

Total Cost: $514,593

Application Description This project is located approximately 18 miles west of the town of Alsea on Hwy 34 directly on the Alsea River and includes the lowest portion of Phillips Creek tributary. The landowners, Scott Stouder and Holly Endersby, own over 63 acres along one mile of the mainstem Alsea River, including the lowest portion of Phillips Creek. The current land use is predominantly agricultural, including a Christmas tree farm that will cease operations in late 2024 on the eastern portion of the site. The western half is managed for early seral habitat for elk forage and cultivated for hay production yearly. The landowners are transitioning to forestry zoning with a goal of restoring a 50/50 hardwood/conifer mix to a majority of their ownership, while retaining early seral and meadow habitat, including a powerline ROW and a vernal pool area to be restored to seasonal wetland/camas swale habitat. The aim of the project is to restore and enhance riparian conditions, wet swale/prairie, and upland habitat by planting a diverse mix of native trees, shrubs, and forbs. This project will benefit numerous fish and wildlife species, including Oregon Coast coho, other salmonids, beaver, elk, deer, migratory birds, flying squirrels, various aquatic organisms, and overall basin health.

This comprehensive effort aims to restore a complex, multi-story canopy to the riparian area along the Alsea River and Phillips Creek, enhancing habitat quality and ecological resilience. Joining OWEB and the landowners in this partnership are the Midcoast Watersheds Council (applicant), USFS and the USFS's Siuslaw Collaborative Watershed Restoration Program (hereafter "Stewardship project"), Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District, and The Confederated Tribe of Siletz Indians .

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The Alsea River watershed contains quality habitat for Oregon coast coho salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout. A 200' wide riparian buffer will be restored on a 1 mile stretch of the mainstem river, which will directly address stream temperature. The extensive buffer width exceeds TMDL criteria.

- The planting plan is diverse and thoughtfully designed. In addition to the riparian habitat proposed, the planting plan includes upland forest, pollinator-focused, and vernal pool plant communities.

- The stewardship plan includes the use of prescribed fire with participation from the Confederated Tribe of Siletz Indians.

- The location is highly visible and likely to provide outreach opportunities to adjacent landowners who may be interested in restoration activities. There are site visits planned with neighbors to discuss the project and other potential sites.

- Phillips Creek, the tributary that bisects the project area, has cold water and will provide juvenile rearing habitat. Improving the riparian plant community along this stream will provide additional shade and wildlife habitat.

- The plant stewardship plan is comprehensive, uses a variety of manual and mechanical tools, and avoids the use of chemical control.

- The project is a result of an OWEB-funded Engagement grant that focused landowner outreach within the Alsea basin over the last several years.

- The costs are appropriate for the proposed actions. The site prep, planting, and stewardship strategies are time-intensive but appropriate for the site. There is substantial watershed benefit for the cost.

Concerns

- No significant concerns are noted during review.

Concluding Analysis

The project site is a former Christmas tree farm with one mile of river frontage along the Alsea River. The applicant is working closely with the landowners and other project partners to restore the site to its native habitat. The planting plan is creative and includes a diversity of plant communities that are likely to provide habitat for a myriad of wildlife types including birds, aquatic organisms, amphibians, ungulates, and pollinators. The collaboration is a successful result of the applicant's outreach in the basin, and this project could be a catalyst for other similar restoration on other nearby properties.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$326,187

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$326,187

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1011-24002
Project Name: Rainforest Reserve Road Decommissioning Phase 1
Applicant: North Coast Land Conservancy
Region: North Coast
OWEB Request: $169,355
Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Clatsop
Total Cost: $265,055

Application Description The Rainforest Reserve is located in Clatsop County and directly west of the town of Arch Cape. The property was conserved by the North Coast Land Conservancy in 2021 with funding support from OWEB to protect over 3,500 acres of unique coastal forest. The property has a rare assembly of habitats that derive from its steep elevation gradient, underlying geology, and close proximity to the ocean.

In the mid-1950s, a road network was established to extensively harvest the entire area, and the property was managed as an industrial tree farm for many decades. In the early 1970's the high elevation rock garden area of Onion Peak was proposed to be a natural area by the state of Oregon and first conserved by The Nature Conservancy in 1982 by a conservation easement. That easement was expanded in 2001 and later transferred to NCLC.

In 2022, NCLC received an OWEB Technical Assistance grant to conduct an ecological road assessment of the 40-mile road network that crosses through the Rainforest Reserve and neighboring Arch Cape Forest. The plan identifies the highest priority roads to decommission on both properties. This phase one proposal will decommission 3.8 miles of roads and remove 83 culverts in two priority areas of the Rainforest Reserve near Arch Cape Creek and West Fork Ecola Creek. These roads are not essential to the long-term stewardship of the property and they negatively impact water quality and habitat for fish and amphibians. NCLC will work with an experienced local contractor to remove the culverts, restore the riparian channels, stabilize and improve the remaining road infrastructure and revegetate the old roads as needed. Our project partners include North Coast Watershed Association, Arch Cape Water District, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as private community members and local technical experts.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project is part of planned stewardship on a 3500-acre conservation property purchased in part with OWEB Acquisition funds. Decommissioning 3.8 miles of road and removing 83 culverts will help reduce the threat of sedimentation to water quality in the watersheds of the Rainforest Reserve.

- The Rainforest Reserve contains rare plant and animal species, including amphibians such as the Columbia Torrent salamander, Cope's salamander, and red legged frogs. The road decommissioning project supports the quality of their wetland and stream habitat. The project design takes into consideration their habitat requirements.

- The Arch Cape water supply has experienced excessive turbidity and subsequent violations of drinking water standards. This project and a companion project on the Arch Cape Community Forest will work together to contribute to a reduction of sediment in the system.

- The project design involves decommission of some mid-slope roads, which typically are a higher risk for causing sedimentation problems. The soil types on the property are silty and gravelly loams that are highly erodible. There is likely to be significant ecological benefit into the future from addressing these roads now.

- The applicant and project team have the necessary capacity and expertise to accomplish the proposed actions. The contractor selected for the project recently completed a similar road decommissioning project on an adjacent property.

- The project is cost-effective because of the high number of culvert removals and road miles that will be decommissioned. The budget is reasonable and the attachments in the application provide a high level of budget detail.

Concerns

- Details on how the rare species will be protected during the project are lacking in the application.

Concluding Analysis

The Rainforest Reserve is a flagship conservation project in Oregon that contains many sensitive plant communities, including many that are uncommon in the coast range. The project builds on previous investments in Engagement and Technical Assistance to implement portions of the road management plan that is part of the ongoing stewardship strategy on the Reserve. The extensive network of forest roads on the property presents a high risk to the sensitive ecology of the site due to sedimentation threats and invasive species pathways. This project decommissions a significant amount of priority roads and is an important step toward ecological recovery on the property.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$169,355

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$169,355

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1012-24028
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Southern Flow Corridor Spruce Swamp Restoration: Planting & Maintenance
Applicant: Tillamook Estuaries Partnership
Region: North Coast
County: Tillamook
OWEB Request: $71,285
Total Cost: $118,395

Application Description Southern Flow Corridor (SFC, 45.473, -123.880), a 521-acre area at the confluence of the Trask, Tillamook, and Wilson Rivers at the south end of Tillamook Bay, was restored to brackish tidal wetlands in 2016. Native low marsh vegetation has naturally replaced reed canary grass (RCG) in low-elevation areas of the site, however, the smaller and higher-elevation North Zone between Hall Slough, Blind Slough, and the Wilson River (45.477, -123.871) remains dominated by RCG. Historically, these higher elevation areas would have been spruce swamp, which would provide healthy estuarine habitat critical for juvenile chinook and coho. However, in the 8 years since initial restoration there is no evidence of additional spruce recruitment from the sporadic spruce trees on site, likely due to the persistence of RCG's thick root mat. For this project, we propose planting 15 acres of spruce across the highest-elevation sections of the North Zone of SFC and maintaining the trees for 4 years to restore historically common but now rare spruce swamp habitat.

The proposed restoration work is closely linked to a funded restoration and monitoring grant through Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) that will develop a planting plan based on elevation, soil salinity and groundwater characteristics, purchase plants, pay for a portion of planting labor, monitor tree health in the two years after planting, and model future impacts of sea-level rise on spruce swamp habitat.

Project implementation partners include Tom McDermott & Tillamook County. Partners from the related RAE grant include Dr. Chris Janousek with Oregon State University & Dr. Laura Brophy with the Institute for Applied Ecology. Plants will be acquired from the North Oregon Restoration Partners Native Plant Nursery.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project will restore 14 acres of Sitka spruce tidal swamp on a conservation property in the Tillamook Bay watershed. Sitka spruce tidal swamp is a declining and imperiled habitat type on the Oregon coast and a priority for restoration.

- Reed canary grass is preventing natural Sitka spruce regeneration; necessitating the strategic plantings using a methodology tested by technical experts.

- Project partners will utilize funding from the Restore America's Estuaries program to design and monitor the effectiveness of 4 different planting techniques. There is an accompanying 4-year monitoring approach that will evaluate the effectiveness of each technique; the results will be shared with partners to help restoration practitioners plan future Sitka spruce swamp projects.

- The planting approach will limit site disturbance by avoiding the use of access roads and heavy equipment that might compromise the marsh plain.

- The project will build on previous investments. An OWEB acquisition grant previously funded the protection of the Southern Flow Corridor property, which is the the largest estuarine restoration project in the state.

- The project implements the Tillamook Bay Strategic Action Plan for coho, which identifies this estuary and habitat type as a priority.

- The applicant and project team has the capacity and technical expertise to implement a successful project. The team includes the applicant's monitoring staff and the local leading native planting expert as well as two leading academic researchers.

- Plant material will be obtained from the Northwest Oregon Restoration Partnership and will be genetically appropriate for the Tillamook Bay estuary.

- Adequate funds and time are budgeted for plant stewardship. The 4 years of weed control will help increase planting survival rates in the reed canary grass dominated areas.

- The project is cost-effective for the expected ecological benefits.

Concerns

- No significant concerns are noted during review.

Concluding Analysis

The Southern Flow Corridor site is a 443-acre estuary restoration project located in the Tillamook Bay watershed. The project was implemented in 2017 to alleviate flooding concerns in Tillamook while also

provide for fish and wildlife habitat. At the time of implementation, plantings were not included as part of the restoration plan. Subsequent post-project monitoring has indicated that some areas of the property are not recovering naturally with native vegetation. The 14-acre planting site is located at a tidal elevation that would historically host Sitka spruce tidal swamp. The proposed project will use adaptive management to test 4 planting methods to restore an extremely rare habitat type on the Oregon coast.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$71,285

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$71,285

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1013-24029
Project Name: ECFR Beaver Community Building!
Applicant: North Coast WS Assn
Region: North Coast
OWEB Request: $131,878

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Clatsop
Total Cost: $189,468

Application Description The Ecola Creek Forest Reserve (ECFR) is comprised of 1,040 acres within the Ecola Creek watershed, 805 acres of which was managed by Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) until it was purchased by the City of Cannon Beach in 2010; Weyerhaeuser sold 160 acres to the city in 2003-04. The ECFR Stewardship Plan (2013) found four major limiting factors to fish presence, one of them was the 'decline of beaver populations' (p.23). Beavers are no longer inhabiting the Ecola Creek watershed in the same numbers as they once did, however, a small population remains in upstream areas.

In 2021, the NCWA used OWEB funds to assemble a technical team of experts to assess existing and potential beaver habitat in the Ecola Creek watershed using the Beaver Restoration Assessment Tool (BRAT). This study determined where beaver sign exists and where there are conditions that could support beaver--especially if early seral riparian plant communities were bolstered. Both the BRAT assessment and the ECFR Stewardship Plan found limited forage to be a key limiting factor for beaver.

The goal of the project is to promote a more functional ecological community with the help of the people who are a part of it, by planting native riparian plants in former blackberry patches or forb-dominated areas that could serve as dam building/forage materials and by hand building post-less Beaver Dam Analogs (BDAs) in strategic areas of the ECFR where there are coho but summer flows are low and channels are incised. Recovering beaver habitats and mimicking their dams will improve habitat conditions for several species of fish including ESA listed salmonids, Pacific lamprey, as well as amphibians, birds and mammals listed in the ODFW Oregon Conservation Strategy.

Partners include Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the City of Cannon Beach, and the National Park Service.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Enhancing beaver habitat is a priority in the north coast. Legacy beaver activity has been noted in the Ecola Creek watershed, indicating there is a possibility of attracting the species to return to the project area.

- The project provides opportunity for a low-risk habitat restoration technique at a reasonable cost.

- The project builds on other restoration in the Ecola Creek watershed, including a recently implemented instream large wood placement project.

- The landowner and project partners are enthusiastic about beaver restoration. The City of Cannon Beach has worked to conserve the municipal watershed and is eager to accomplish restoration that benefits watershed health.

- Restoring beaver habitat within the Ecola Creek Forest Reserve will improve floodplain connectivity.

- There are opportunities to raise public awareness at the project location given the high public use of the property. The applicant is skilled with public outreach and has effectively brought the community together around the project.

- Restoring woody vegetation is likely to attract beavers to the stream reaches in Ecola Creek. The methods for utilizing existing alders to build upon existing habitat structures and plant protection are clearly defined in the application.

Concerns

- Previous project evaluation concerns are not addressed; for example, the maps still lack detail needed to decipher exactly where the proposed sites are located.
- It is unclear whether the BRAT model, which was developed in the Willamette Valley, is an appropriate tool for the coast range.
- Newer data shows that beavers on the north coast are not as active dam builders as they are in other parts of the state. They tend to be bank dwellers, which means they may be present and just undetected.
- The proposed approach forces dams to provide coho habitat by building Beaver Dam Analogues (BDA). Given recent data related to beaver behavior on the north coast, it is unlikely that beavers would maintain the dams in this high streamflow energy system.
- The proposed willow plantings and species may not be appropriately placed for the site conditions, the planting pods are proposed in locations where they are likely to be washed away. Clearing native hardwoods and replacing them with willow thickets that may not have been naturally present along Ecola Creek is unlikely to provide meaningful ecological uplift for the cost.

- The post-less BDAs prescribed utilizes sediment to anchor the structures. If they are not installed correctly, the sediment can create a passage barrier and there can be an increased likelihood of them blowing out during high flows.
- Over 100 trees are proposed to be felled in the riparian area to provide material for BDA structures and open the forest canopy so shrubs can thrive. There may be water quality concerns with this approach by reducing shade; the justification for altering the native hardwood forest is unclear.
- The cost of the blackberry removal seems high for a ½ acre of clearing compared to similar projects.

Concluding Analysis

The project goal is to encourage beaver populations in the Ecola Creek watershed in the protected Ecola Creek Forest Reserve. Establishing beaver within the forest could help improve floodplain connectivity and fish habitat. Legacy beaver structures have been encountered within the watershed, and the City's enthusiasm in encouraging beaver is commendable. This is the fourth submittal of this application; while some of the review team comments are addressed, it is unclear whether the proposed actions can effectively achieve the expected habitat outcomes and benefits to Oregon coastal coho. Also, the habits of north coast beavers appear to be different than in other parts of the state, which could mean that this high flow energy creek may not be a preferred place for the type of dam building that directly benefits Oregon coast coho and other fish species.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

n/a

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1015-23936
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: Tuffy Creek Fish Passage - Building Resilience in a Changing Climate
Applicant: Tillamook Estuaries Partnership
Region: North Coast
County: Tillamook
OWEB Request: $339,854
Total Cost: $1,107,214

Application Description The proposed project requests funding for technical design assistance that would result in construction to improve fish passage at Tuffy Dam on the South Fork Wilson River (Tillamook Bay basin). The current diversion dam and fish ladder does not meet the state or federal fish passage criteria. Currently it is a barrier to juvenile salmonid and lamprey migration, partial barrier to adult salmonid migration, and a partial or possibly complete barrier to adult lamprey migration. This fish passage project would increase access to over 12 miles of fish habitat and would benefit Chinook salmon, coho salmon, steelhead, cutthroat trout, and lamprey. The project would create access for juvenile salmonids to the cold water refugia and rearing habitat of the S Fk Wilson. The current dam supplies water to the Tuffy Cr rearing pond (satellite facility of ODFW's Trask River Hatchery) and to the Oregon Department of Corrections (jointly operated with the Oregon Department of Forestry) S Fk Forest Camp, an Adults in Custody rehabilitation camp. A fish trapping/sorting facility allows for removal of returning hatchery fish, reducing competition with wild stocks. The dam must be retained to allow operation of the rearing pond (which raises spring Chinook and winter steelhead to provide popular recreational angling opportunity in the Tillamook Bay basin) while also providing water to the S Fk camp. Adult trapping during hatchery returns is necessary to remove hatchery fish and to collect hatchery broodstock. Technical assistance, engineering, and permitting are needed to design an appropriate fish ladder to allow for passage of salmonids and lamprey. The goal of the project is to design a structure that meets fish passage standards while retaining the diversion dam and fish ladder, necessary for the operation of the rearing pond and camp. Project partners include Tillamook Estuary Partnership, ODFW, Bureau of Reclamation, Oregon Department of Forestry, Department of Corrections.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Tuffy Creek provides habitat for a range of aquatic species. The project will provide improved access to high quality habitat for Chinook, Oregon coast coho salmon, and cutthroat trout.

- The site is identified as a priority on the ODFW fish barrier list. The fish ladder at the hatchery is outdated and is not providing passage to juvenile fish or lamprey.

- The project could provide some resilience for fish with future climate change scenarios. Currently there is adequate cool water in the system, but in the future the cool water refugia upstream in Tuffy Creek could become more important as mainstem temperatures rise.

- Some previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by clarifying that the project will solely focus on addressing fish passage at Tuffy Dam and not for other hatchery infrastructure.

- The applicant has demonstrated capacity implementing similar projects.

Concerns

- The connection between the actions, budget, and work plan is unclear in the application. For example, it is unclear how some budget items are related to achieving the proposed technical assistance actions. Also, it is not clear how action four is different from the other actions described.

- No design alternatives will be considered due to constraints from the fish hatchery operation. Additional information in the narrative is needed to understand why the options are limited to only the selected design solution.

- Additional information describing how costs were estimated is needed to understand whether the costs are reasonable and necessary for achieving the proposed actions.

- Additional detail is needed to understand how the Bureau of Reclamation match is related to implementing the proposed technical assistance actions. The lump sum provided in the budget lacks details needed to understand whether this match is for design or implementation.

- The budget includes fish screening design costs and there is no corresponding narrative explaining the nature of the costs. Additional information is needed to determine whether costs related to the fish screen is eligible for OWEB funding.

Concluding Analysis

Improving fish passage to the significant amount of habitat upstream of the fish hatchery could have considerable ecological benefit to native fish populations, but the constraints of the hatchery limit the possible design solutions to the fish ladder. It is challenging to understand the cost-effectiveness of the design and likelihood of implementation with the details provided in the budget and narrative. More information about the match funding and the constraints from hatchery operations that are limiting the design solution would help establish a clearer picture of the actions proposed and reconcile the limited alternatives available to the project.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

n/a

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1016-23954
Project Name: Mary's Creek Final Engineering & Design
Applicant: Tillamook Estuaries Partnership
Region: North Coast
OWEB Request: $145,830

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Tillamook
Total Cost: $203,980

Application Description This technical assistance application is to fund final engineering, design, and permitting work for two culvert replacements on Mary's Creek, a tributary of Fawcett Creek in the Tillamook Bay Watershed of Tillamook County. Anadromous salmonid fish species occurring in the Tillamook Watershed include spring and fall chinook salmon, coho salmon, summer and winter steelhead, and sea-run cutthroat trout. These two culverts are the two lowest fish passage barriers in Mary's creek before it joins Fawcett creek. Each culvert exists on a separate private property, owned by Robert Phillips and Bradley Pierce, respectively.

Mary's creek was surveyed by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) biologists in the summer of 2022. Cutthroat trout and coho salmon fry were found present at the time of survey. The survey identified 1.19 miles of coho habitat upstream from the lowest fish passage barrier, and 1.78 miles of fish habitat upstream of the lowest barrier total.

The goal of this project is to secure complete engineering designs for replacement of both culverts with adequately sized structures and streambed simulation design.

Engineering designs have, to date, been contracted out to a private engineering firm, Wolf Water Resources. TEP will prepare and release an RFP for 100% engineering designs, manage the engineering contract, and convene the technical team for design review. TEP also has the option, with Board approval, to hire Wolf Water Resources without a new RFP release.

Project partners include Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Trout Unlimited (TU), USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and Tillamook County Public Works (TCPW).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The resulting restoration project will restore passage to 1.8 miles of habitat for Chinook, coho, steelhead, lamprey, and potentially chum. Mary's Creek is a priority location in the Tillamook Bay watershed to restore habitat. There is high potential for fish productivity upstream of the two undersized culverts.

- The project team has considered several alternatives and will engage a technical team to provide input during the design process. A broad partnership is behind the effort, including local, state, and federal agencies.

- The applicant has a proven track record of success with similar projects.

- The selected contractor is qualified for the proposed technical assistance.

- The design includes climate change considerations by modeling and designing for increased flows.

- Intact riparian forest is present along portions of the stream reaches that provides shade and will likely contribute to future large wood recruitment into the stream.

Concerns

- This is the second Technical Assistance application for the project and costs for the design have increased from what was originally expected. The application lacks clarity in how the costs are estimated. More detail about all the components of the project that influenced costs and led to the need for a second grant request would be helpful to understand whether costs are reasonable and necessary.

- There are costs in the budget that do not correlate clearly with the proposed actions. For example, there are staff listed without clear roles in the work plan.

Concluding Analysis

Mary’s Creek is a tributary of Fawcett Creek in the Tillamook Bay watershed. The creek is prime habitat for a full suite of fish species, including Oregon coast coho salmon. Despite its small size, the stream has quality spawning and rearing habitat. The proposed project will continue the design work that already began with a previously funded OWEB Technical Assistance grant. More information about the cost increases for the design would clarify the need for the second design phase.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

5 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$145,830

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1017-23957
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: Irish Culvert Priority Fish Restoration Designs
Applicant: Trout Unlimited Inc
Region: North Coast
County: Tillamook
OWEB Request: $122,568
Total Cost: $129,568

Application Description The proposed fish passage project is located on private property upstream from where an Unnamed Tributary to the Little Nestucca River crosses under county owned Irish Road. This tributary flows from Siuslaw National Forest land through private property where the crossing is located at river mile 0.7, before joining with the Little Nestucca.

A plastic undersized culvert sits about a half mile from the confluence and is a full barrier to adult and juvenile fish. This culvert is 32 " wide and approximately 42' long. The downstream active channel width is 2.67 meters, and the upstream active channel width is 4'1". This culvert is perched about 3’ above the water surface blocking access to pristine spawning and rearing habitat.

This stream has documented salmonid use and a recent stream survey from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife shows 0.8 miles of ideal spawning and rearing habitat above the culvert.

This proposal will secure final engineering designs for replacement of this culvert with an appropriately sized structure and stream bed simulation design. Once constructed, this project will restore full passage to 0.8 miles of spawning and rearing habitat for native migratory fish, including ESA listed Coho Salmon. Engineering designs will be contracted to a private engineering firm. Trout Unlimited will release a request for proposals for designs, manage the contract, and involve the projects technical team for review.

Project partners include the sole private landowner, US Forest Service (USFS), US Fish and Wildlife (USFWS), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Tillamook County Public Works (TCPW), and the Nestucca Neskowin Sand Lake Watershed Council (NNSLWC).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project will restore fish access to 0.8 miles of high quality complex cold-water habitat that provides spawning and rearing for Oregon coast coho salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout. The stream has its headwaters in protected Siuslaw National Forest land. Currently a private road is a complete fish passage barrier due to a perched culvert that is inaccessible to fish.

- The creek has a healthy riparian area and sinuous channels throughout the floodplain.

- The project team has planned an alternatives analysis process that will evaluate possibilities before arriving at a design solution.

- Replacing the fish barrier with a passable structure at the project location on a Little Nestucca River tributary will build on previous investments in restoration. A previously funded OWEB Restoration grant restored native riparian habitat on the property downstream where this unnamed tributary enters the Little Nestucca River. The Salmon SuperHwy is also in the process of replacing the downstream fish impediment on the same tributary where it crosses under Irish Road. Collectively, these investments will significantly improve habitat for fish in the localized watershed.

- The private landowner is engaged with the project and committed to restoring favorable conditions for fish and wildlife on their property, demonstrated by their attendance on the project site visit and successful participation in past OWEB-funded restoration projects.

- The applicant has demonstrated capacity with implementing other similar projects.

- The costs for the design are reasonable and the resulting restoration is likely to be cost-effective for the ecological benefit expected.

Concerns

- A downstream crossing under the county road is slated for replacement, but the timeline is uncertain until funding is secured for implementation. While it is not a complete barrier, full ecological benefit of the proposed project is unlikely to be achieved without addressing that downstream structure. The project partners are working with the county to apply for design and implementation funds to address the barrier.

Concluding Analysis

The project addresses a complete barrier to fish passage on an unnamed tributary of the Little Nestucca River and will restore access to high quality aquatic habitat. The project is adjacent to several other restoration projects that address limiting factors in the Little Nestucca watershed, including stream temperature and fish passage.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$122,568

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$122,568

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1018-23973
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: Gallagher Slough Tidal Wetland Enhancements
Applicant: Lower Nehalem WC
Region: North Coast
County: Tillamook
OWEB Request: $148,319
Total Cost: $208,469

Application Description This is a project prioritized by the Nehalem Basin Partnership and the Nehalem Strategic Action Plan for Coho.

This project is focused on tidal wetland habitats currently blocked from natural tidal influences by the Gallagher Slough tide gates. The Gallagher Slough tide gates are located at the intersection of Hwy 101 and Hwy 53 under an ODOT bridge north of Wheeler, OR in Tillamook County. The Bureau of Reclamation has provided funding for the design, removal, relocation, and upgrading of the tide gates but those funds are not allocated for tidal wetland restoration. Tidal wetland restoration is essential to this project to provide benefit to salmonid populations and designs for that work must proceed in tandem with tide gate designs. This project will fund an alternatives analysis and 30% design set for tidal wetland restoration to occur alongside the tide gate work. Options include restoration of habitats opened up to full tidal flows as well as low lying areas within the tide gates that the landowner has stated he is willing to restore. Restoration options include tidal channel creation, native plant installation, installation of wood structures, and more. This project is being implemented with support from the Bureau of Reclamation, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Transportation, Tillamook County Creamery Association, Sunset Drainage and Diking District, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, the Nature Conservancy, Greengold Dairy, and Marti Holsteins.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Gallagher Slough is the largest slough in the Nehalem estuary. Historically, the slough provided important rearing habitat for all salmonid fish species and once supported very productive populations.

- The project ties in closely with the effort to replace the Gallagher Slough tide gates with more fish friendly structures. If the tide gates are replaced, the proposed tidal enhancements will provide better habitat for estuarine aquatic species. Improving access to estuary and tidal channels is an identified action in the Nehalem Strategic Action Plan for Coho.

- The project is supported by a partnership that includes ODOT, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, and the Tillamook County Creamery Association.

- The application addresses some concerns from previous reviews by expanding on the habitat restoration upstream and separating out the tide gate repair and replacement components.

Concerns

- The specifics of the tide gate replacement are unclear, such as the expected location of the new tide gates. As a result, the possible extent of tidal restoration and estuary habitat is uncertain.

- The water quality in Gallagher Slough is poor and it is unclear how the proposed technical assistance will lead to restoration actions that will contribute to an improvement. Additional detail describing design considerations that will be made to prevent pollutant introduction into the slough is needed to understand the potential water quality improvement outcomes referenced in the application.

- When the tide gate structure on Gallagher Slough under Highway 101 is replaced, ODOT is planning to remove the gates from the structure and leave the existing concrete in place. Fish passage will continue to be limited at the remaining structure , and fish will still need to also pass through the newly proposed tide gates that will be moved upstream. The location of those new tide gates, associated water management plans, and degree of fish passage through the concrete tide gate structures are unclear.

- Alternatives under consideration do not include setback levees as an option, which could allow for more tidal exchange and improved water quality. Alternatives, such as dredging and placing fill on other portions of the property, may have a negligible benefit to habitat.

- The design needs of this project and the adjacent tide gate project are complex and landscape level in nature. Coordinating restoration in Gallagher Slough will require significant capacity for project partners. It is unclear which entity will lead these combined efforts or whether the capacity is present to ensure likelihood of success.

Concluding Analysis

Gallagher Slough has historically provided important rearing habitat for fish, including Oregon coast coho salmon, and there is significant potential for high ecological benefit with tidal restoration actions on this property. The landowner is engaged in the project and open to a variety of alternatives that could serve to increase the amount of estuary in the Nehalem watershed while still preserving the farm's current land use as part of a working landscape. It is unclear, however, what options are available for the project as there is limited information about the tide gate replacement project. The location of the

proposed new gates is unknown, making it difficult to understand the extent of tidal restoration possible and what alternatives may be feasible on the site. It is unclear whether project managers, the landowner, and other project partners are united in their conceptual understanding of the goals for the technical assistance. The project would benefit from clear leadership and coordination of the different funding sources, project elements, and partners.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

n/a

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1019-23975
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: South Scappoose and Raymond Creek Confluence Floodplain Design
Applicant: Scappoose Bay WC
Region: North Coast
County: Columbia
OWEB Request: $86,922
Total Cost: $91,373

Application Description This technical assistance project is located on the Raymond Creek and South Scappoose Creek Confluence, a tributary to South Scappoose Creek, Scappoose Bay and the Lower Columbia River (LCR). The site is approximately 3 miles upstream of the City of Scappoose, in southern Columbia County. Written reports and oral histories indicate that all fish species have declined dramatically in the watershed, including this confluence. LCR Coho, Steelhead and Cutthroat were all historically abundant in Raymond Creek, and were observed in limited numbers during ODFW surveys (SBWC Watershed Assessment, 2000). The Limiting Factor Analysis determined this confluence anchor habitat site number two for South Scappoose Creek and Fourth in the watershed. Rural residential development has led to poor instream and riparian conditions, including eroding and undercut banks, fish passage concerns, stream channelization, cattle grazing and crossings, lack of large wood and lack of riparian vegetation (ODFW Aquatic Inventory, 2009). Local landowners have expressed concerns due to recent erosional issues and flooding, leading to this proposal. The project will analyze hydrologic and geomorphic conditions, conduct two-dimensional modeling and restoration designs for adding improvements to instream and riparian conditions. The engineer will use previous designs from the Raymond Creek project landowners that have designs but improve on them for habitat restoration and remove the previous focus of infrastructure. This project includes a number of landowners down stream of the previous technical assistance grant at the confluence, below the confluence and on South Scappoose Creek. The project will work with landowners on alternative analyses, and permitting agencies to find the best alternative for implementing restoration actions. Refined designs will be submitted to permitting entities. Project partners include landowners, Columbia County, CSWCD, ODFW, Waterways and the SBWC.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Data developed during a previous OWEB funded Technical Assistance grant for the project area will be utilized to design permit-ready stream restoration designs. The new approach will improve on past design efforts and incorporate lessons learned in developing restoration alternatives. The project area is now more focused on high priority sites for floodplain restoration.

- Raymond Creek has been identified as anchor habitat for salmonids in previous assessments of the Scappoose Bay watershed. The resulting restoration project will address habitat limiting factors for Lower Columbia River fish, including coho, steelhead, and cutthroat trout.

- Restoration in Raymond Creek could have potential spawning habitat benefits.

- The project builds off past investments in the South Scappoose watershed, including a large wood placement project farther upstream in the upper part of Raymond Creek.

- The alternatives analysis considers a range of restoration actions to arrive at a design that will provide ecological uplift within the stream reach.

- The project team has the right assemblage of expertise and has experience implementing similar projects.

- The cost for the proposed deliverables is reasonable.

Concerns

- Additional detail describing landowner outreach is needed to understand how and when landowners will be engaged at critical steps through the design process. The action describing landowner communication in the application is generally described and the timeline is lumped into the work plan for the entire project period. Information describing when and how landowners will be engaged would be helpful for understanding how landowner input will be incorporated into the design process and in the consideration of alternatives. For example, additional information describing the range of possible restoration actions, how these alternatives will be presented to landowners, and how the preferred alternative will be selected with landowner input before reaching the 85% design product would be helpful for understanding the sequence of the proposed technical assistance actions. Well-timed landowner engagement will be important for securing their support for the final design.

- Including information captured on the conceptual alternatives map provided in the application into the action two narrative would be helpful for understanding how the range of alternatives will be considered during the design process.

- The potential restoration opportunities in the middle reach of Raymond Creek may be limited due to the site constraints associated with the rural residential land use.

Concluding Analysis

OWEB has funded a previous Technical Assistance project along the same stream reach on Raymond Creek, but a subsequent Restoration application was not funded due to the inclusion of a few project components that were not cost-effective for the expected ecological benefit. This is the second application for Technical Assistance funding to pursue another design pathway, with the first being recommended for funding but falling below the line. In this submittal, the comments from the previous review are not addressed. More information describing what alternatives the landowners might accept, and how they will participate and be engaged throughout the design process is needed to understand the project's likelihood of success.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

n/a

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1020-23987
Project Name: Kilchis Watershed Functional Assessment
Applicant: The Nature Conservancy
Region: North Coast
OWEB Request: $150,000

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Tillamook
Total Cost: $189,294

Application Description This project will take place in the Kilchis River watershed and estuary in Tillamook County. It will identify where restoration actions could take place to both improve the watershed's ecological function and deliver community benefits such as flood reduction and a more resilient community water system. This proposed analysis grew out of The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) use of hydrologic modeling to direct tidal marsh restoration on our Kilchis Estuary Preserve, the observed need for riparian reforestation in the watershed above our preserve, and the recognition that the watershed will undergo changes as a result of climate change. The Kilchis watershed is critically important for all salmon species and has one of the most resilient runs of chum salmon in Oregon.

TNC has consistently called for a comprehensive watershed functional evaluation to identify the root causes of decreased watershed function as well as develop potential remedies or restoration actions. In addition to the need for better ecological functioning, the local community has continuing concerns about flooding. There have also been concerns that the Kilchis Valley Water District (3 miles upstream from tidelands) has been impacted by flooding. Lastly, there is now a defunct gravel operation in the lower watershed that may be problematic. Taking a comprehensive look at watershed function and analyzing how to improve it requires a rigorous assessment.

We propose to work with Tillamook Estuaries Partnership (TEP) to contract with Northwest Hydraulic Consultants (NHC) to conduct the analysis. NHC is a trusted contractor in the community and is highly qualified to conduct the assessment. They provide innovative and specialized hydrotechnical engineering and geoscience consulting services. The community outreach and engagement aspect of the project will be managed by TEP along with support by the Tillamook County Creamery Association (TCCA) and Tillamook Bay Flood Improvement District (TBFID).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The goals and objectives described in the application are clear and the methods proposed are appropriate for evaluating altered hydrologic and ecosystem functions in Kilchis River Watershed to recommend site-specific restoration options.

- The Kilchis watershed is a priority location to restore habitat for Oregon coast coho salmon and is host to a run of chum salmon, which are becoming increasingly uncommon along the northern Oregon coast.

- The assessment will provide valuable information that can be applied to restoration planning and prioritization in the Kilchis watershed.

- The applicant and project team have the capacity to lead the project and the experience with similar types of assessments. The selected contractor has been instrumental in communicating with landowners previously on other projects in the Tillamook Bay watershed.

- The costs for the data collection, analysis, and landowner outreach are reasonable for the ecological benefit that a basin-wide understanding of hydrology could bring.

- The study will build on past investments in restoration and conservation in the Kilchis watershed.

Concerns

- The possibility of future restoration opportunities is unclear because landowners have been reticent in the past to pursue projects due to fears of increased flooding.

- Infrastructure constraints, including the railroad and Highway 101, will likely limit the alternatives that may be pursued.

Concluding Analysis

The Kilchis River watershed is a priority location for salmon habitat restoration, but opportunities have been limited by a lack of current information on the hydrology of the watershed. The Nature Conservancy recently finished a large-scale estuarine restoration project in the lower part of the watershed and is now continuing to work with the community on addressing watershed issues upstream. The type of functional assessment proposed will provide hydrologic information useful for identifying restoration opportunities that provide benefits to both landowners and fish.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$150,000

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$150,000

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1021-23988
Project Name: Beaver Creek Floodplain Restoration Design
Applicant: MidCoast WC
Region: North Coast
OWEB Request: $92,928

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Lincoln
Total Cost: $145,128

Application Description The Beaver Creek Floodplain Restoration Project is in the Yaquina River Basin, approximately 2.5 miles West of the Beaver Creek confluence with Depot Slough in Toledo, OR. This stream has been designated as Essential Salmonid Habitat and is important spawning and rearing habitat for ESA listed Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Winter Steelhead, Pacific Lamprey, and Coastal Cutthroat Trout.

This project seeks funding for technical assistance for an alternatives analysis and design of a restoration project that will address factors limiting the recovery and conservation of Oregon Coast Coho identified in state and federal conservation and recovery plans. The project will develop a shovel ready design for a floodplain restoration project that will increase winter and summer rearing habitat for juvenile salmonids by restoring floodplain connectivity, instream complexity, and a healthy riparian habitat to build resiliency against the future impacts of global climate change.

Project partners include the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife MidCoast District, ODFW Private Forest Accord funding, a contracted Engineering firm, and two private landowners.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application clearly articulates the site conditions, the need for technical assistance, the plan for the design, and the range of possible alternatives. The work plan and timeline are realistic.

- The project will address the primary limiting factors for Oregon coast coho salmon by improving instream complexity and water quality in Beaver Creek, which is located in the Yaquina watershed. Floodplain connectivity a healthy riparian habitat will be restored.

- The modeling analysis and alternatives assessment will be used to determine the preferred alternative for channel relocation and meandering.

- The future restoration project is likely to encourage beaver presence on the landscape by restoring a hardwood shrub component to the floodplain.

- Restoring the stream to a natural channel away from the road will result in benefits to water quality.

- The project partners have the necessary capacity and track record to achieve the proposed outcomes and include a breadth of expertise from ODFW and the two private landowners.

- The project is cost-effective by using existing LiDAR and bathymetric data in the design process. The budget is appropriate for the deliverables that will include 90% designs and permits.

- There are outreach opportunities to raise awareness about watershed restoration with a downstream landowner that operates an educational facility at their farm. The landowners are interested in promoting the project and restoration practices.

Concerns

- No significant concerns are noted during review.

Concluding Analysis

The resulting restoration project within the Beaver Creek basin in the Yaquina watershed will result in improved habitat conditions for aquatic species, including Oregon coast coho salmon. The project will improve water quality, increase instream habitat complexity, and restore native plant communities.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$92,928

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$92,928

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1022-24021
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: Thompson Creek Technical Assistance Phase I
Applicant: Necanicum WC
Region: North Coast
County: Clatsop
OWEB Request: $187,603
Total Cost: $198,413

Application Description 1) Thompson Creek is a highly productive ESA-listed and Evolutionarily Significant Unit of coho and steelhead stream on the north end of Seaside with direct drainage into the Stanley Lake and the Necanicum Estuary. The stream high has intrinsic potential for coho habitat. It currently has a productive but declining coho run and has stretches of stream that are essentially roadside ditch and reaches with little to no sinuosity.

2) Regardless of challenging habitat conditions in the current (non-traditional) location of the stream channel, coho and steelhead utilize the upstream habitat of Thompson Creek annually with high productivity and high quality spawning habitat. The run is declining, however, and there have been continued discussions between the NWC and partners about a collective effort to review large-scale restoration opportunities to move Thompson Creek closer to its original channel and reconnect with Stanley Marsh (NCLC conserved habitat).

3) Funding from this proposal would allow the following priorities necessary for project success:

a) Provide NWC with staff capacity to conduct in-depth partner collaboration meetings, landowner and stakeholder outreach, and contractor oversight during habitat surveying and alternatives analysis and designs and;

b) Retain a qualified professional stream engineering firm to conduct habitat surveying and produce alternatives analyses and a 30% design of the preferred alternative for Thompson Creek restoration.

4) Project partners will include:
- Necanicum Watershed Council
- North Coast Land Conservancy
- City of Gearhart
- City of Seaside
- Nuveen Natural Capital
- Private residential landowners (potential need for land access)
- Clatsop County
- ODFW

- USFWS
- Chinook Indian Nation

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The need for the technical assistance is clear. The project site is complex with numerous constraints associated with the adjacent roads and housing development and there is not a clear understanding of current hydrology nor where the stream was located historically.

- The Thompson Creek basin is small, but it once supported one of the largest local coho runs in the Necanicum estuary when all the culverts were passable. The wetlands contain high quality rearing habitat. Rerouting the creek through the existing wetland would increase rearing habitat and fish productivity.

- Multiple species will benefit from the project, including beaver, birds, and amphibians.

- Restoration of Thompson Creek will also have water quality benefits. One of the alternatives is to move the creek away from the road, which will improve water quality and create opportunities for improved riparian function.

- Some of the surrounding habitat is in conservation ownership by a land trust and has potential for future habitat improvements.

- There are opportunities for community outreach to raise awareness about watershed restoration given this project site’s urban interface and its association with the land trust.

- The watershed council has developed a partnership with the Chinook Nation and the budget includes funding for the Tribe to participate in the design process.

- The project team includes the expertise and capacity to achieve the deliverables described.

- The budget provided is adequately detailed to understand how the expected costs were determined.

Concerns

- Thompson Creek is a productive coho stream, but due to the natural passage barrier upstream, the restoration project may have limited cost benefit for coho recovery.

Concluding Analysis

Thompson Creek, despite its small size, hosts a thriving Oregon coast coho salmon population and is often a place where the community of Seaside can visit to view wild salmon. Its unique hydrology and fish rearing potential in the wetlands make it a priority place to implement restoration and conservation. This is the second submittal of the application and concerns from the previous review have been addressed with a detailed budget, additional information on the site complexities, and explanation describing the technical team that will be evaluating alternatives for design selection.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$187,603

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$187,603

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1023-23965
Project Type: Engagement_v2
Project Name: Coastal Native Plant Materials Engagement to Improve Restoration Outcomes
Applicant: Institute for Applied Ecology
Region: North Coast
County: Lincoln
OWEB Request: $42,248
Total Cost: $57,832

Application Description Coastal ecosystems are among the most rare and impacted ecosystems in the Pacific NW and as a result, threatened and endangered species, and the habitats where they make their home, are greatly imperiled. One barrier to successful restoration is a lack of diverse, locally adapted native seed available for large-scale restoration projects. The Coastal Native Seed Partnership (CNSP) was formed in 2020 to increase the availability and affordability of native seed to restore Pacific NW coastal habitats including coastal grasslands, dunes, and estuaries. CNSP partners are located along the Oregon coast from Gold Beach to Astoria and the partnership extends to Willapa Bay, WA. With four years of partner meetings under its belt, the CNSP has identified a need for additional work to engage partners and develop or compile native seed mix design resources as well as develop or compile resources for restoration practitioners and native seed growers. This will help coastal partners develop and implement more efficient and resilient restoration projects. Key partners include U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service. Natural Resource Conservation Service, The Nature Conservancy, Midcoast Watershed Council, Bureau of Land Management, Curry Watersheds Partnership, Coos Watershed Association, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, The Understory Initiative, McKenzie River Trust, and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The Coastal Native Seed Partnership (CNSP) brings together coastal partners to address seed availability of genetically appropriate native plants, a known limiting factor to habitat restoration on the Oregon coast.
- The CNSP focuses on the need for seed in several critical and rare coastal habitats, including coastal prairie and estuary.
- Outreach will be conducted to restoration practitioners on the south coast, an area of the state that has been under-represented in similar efforts in the past.
- The applicant is collaborating with other organizations doing similar work to engage new partners who may have the space and ability to grow native plant materials. For example, NRCS has been engaged to assist growers and the Rogue Partnership is also providing technical assistance.

- The project builds on previously funded OWEB grants that have helped develop the native seed partnership and outline the need for various seed mixes on the coast that are integral to restoration.
- Demand for native and genetically appropriate seed is growing with the increasing occurrence of wildfires in the state. There is a high need for a consistent source of native seed on the coast to address impacts from wildfire and restore habitat for sensitive species.
- The Partnership is incorporating plans to become a self-sustaining endeavor in the future.
- The approach is cost-effective in addressing the identified need.

Concerns

- The expected deliverables from the engagement actions are unclear beyond the production of seed mix guides and developing new opportunities for growers.
- It is unclear whether the Partnership has effective leadership needed to achieve long term sustainability of the program.

Concluding Analysis

The availability of seed appropriate for coastal Oregon habitats has been a long-identified barrier to accomplishing restoration in the region, particularly in coastal prairie habitats. Previous investments in the CNSP have provided the necessary tools to bring partners together, identify target species, and establish fields that will make seed available to restoration practitioners. The engagement actions described in the application will continue the important work of the CNSP and increase the availability of seed by bringing in new partners and growers.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 2

Review Team Recommended Amount

$42,248

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$42,248

Staff Conditions

n/a

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

North Coast (Region 1)

Application Name: 225-1024-24055
Project Name: Big Creek Watershed Restoration Charrette
Applicant: North Coast WS Assn
Region: North Coast
OWEB Request: $114,378

Project Type: Engagement_v2
County: Clatsop
Total Cost: $133,578

Application Description This project includes the lower portion of Big Creek, tributary to the Columbia River. The project area
includes the estuary transition and lower watersheds of Big and Little Creek as identified in Return of the Redds. The floodplains of Big Creek and Little Creek have been significantly altered from a historic gravel mine and are all in private ownership.

The stream sections have eroding and degraded streambanks, lack riparian habitat, and have degraded aquatic habitat. The lower reaches are low gradient and have historically supported chum salmon spawning habitat. Previous explorations for restoration were discouraged by a critical landowner. Land ownership has changed and an interest in exploring restoration efforts have been expressed.
The project is designed to compile information on the historical development of conditions, evaluate landowner needs and identify alternative projects to restore the reach for anadromous fish with a focus on chum salmon.

Project partners will include the landowners in the reach, Clatsop County, Clatsop Works, Clatsop Community College, DSL, ODFW, ODF, ODOT, NOAA, and USFWS.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The engagement strategy is creative and will combine community input with technical expertise from restoration professionals to arrive at concepts for improving the health of the Big Creek watershed. Local college students will also be involved in the process through a capstone project.
- The project area is in the lower estuary transition portion of Big Creek, a tributary of the Lower Columbia River that has been identified as a priority for chum restoration.
- The project builds on previous OWEB investments in Engagement and Technical Assistance that helped generate the “Return of the Redds,” a campaign built around a strategic action plan for chum salmon in the watershed.

- A technical assistance provider will be engaged to develop conceptual restoration designs on a site identified at the confluence of Big Creek and Little Creek. The selected provider is able to build on data already collected, providing cost efficiencies. The privately owned site has new landowners that are ready to engage with restoration.

- Products expected from the project include historical analysis of habitat conditions, hydrologic modeling, and geomorphology information. The technical information will be translated into clear visuals for audience members to assist with a conversation around design solutions.

- The applicant has demonstrated capacity for the proposed outreach actions.

Concerns

- It is unclear what watershed problem the project is trying to address. The proposed actions seem both far-reaching and hyper-focused with the concentration on one specific site and also the entire lower watershed area. The scope of the proposed actions may be difficult to accomplish with the budget.

- Some of the design actions will require ODOT's engagement because Highway 30 bisects the project area. It is unclear whether the possible alternatives described will be feasible.

- The project includes a heavy amount of data collection and technical work, with a significant portion of the budget going to an engineering consultant. It is unclear how this is necessary to support the watershed charette process being used to gain community support. More information about how the site-specific technical products will interface with the watershed charette process would help clarify how the engagement approach will achieve landowner support for future restoration.

Concluding Analysis

Community engagement will focus both on the Big Creek-Little Creek confluence restoration site and the entire lower portion of the Big Creek watershed. The Big Creek watershed is a priority location to restore habitat for chum salmon. The project builds off previous investments in the watershed by continuing community engagement within a charrette-type process. Technical expertise will be solicited from an engineering firm to help guide the conversation around restoration alternatives and secure support for future projects on private property.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 2

Review Team Recommended Amount

$114,378

Review Team Conditions

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

n/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

n/a

South Coast - Region 2 Fall 2024 Funding Recommendations

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Funding Recommendation

- Staff Recommendation For Funding (SRF)
- Below Funding Line (BFL)

Previous Grants 1998 - Spring 2024

- Land Acquisition
- Restoration
- Region 2 Cities
- Region 2 Streams
- OWEB Region 2 Boundary

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

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https://www.Oregon.gov/OWEB/

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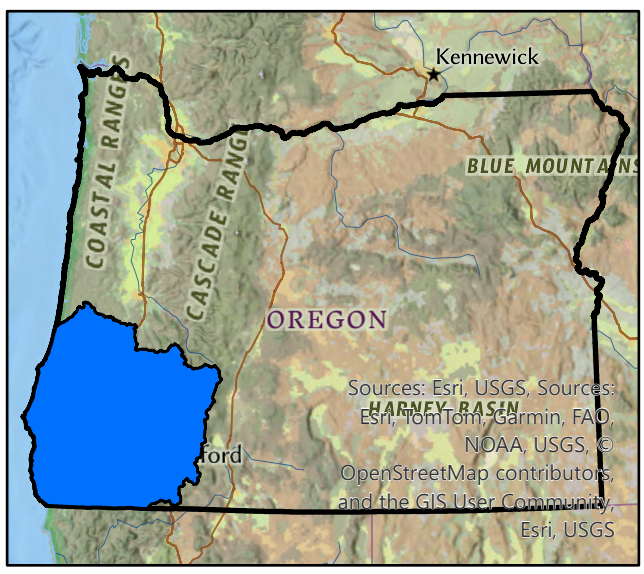


Region 2 - Southwest Oregon Restoration

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-2006	Curry SWCD	Rogue Rearing Habitat Implementation	The principal goal of this project is to extend the high-value habitat of GWY Slough into Elephant Bar through excavation of new slough channels. Instream structure, complexity, and shelter will be created through development of diverse geomorphic features and incorporation of large wood structures, and a diverse assemblage of riparian vegetation will be established which will promote shading and cooler water temperatures. Additional project goals are to ensure connectivity and fish passage.	$ 442,454
225-2005	Cascade Pacific RC&D	Big Creek Wetland Restoration	Restore 77 acres of agricultural land into a naturally functioning pemc1a wetland within the Big Creek subbasin following the engineering specifications to improve native fisheries habitat and water quality and transfer the property title to the CTCLUSI in 2025.	$ 681,615
225-2004	Illinois Valley WC	Crooks Creek Large Wood Placement	This Restoration's goal seeks to recover hydrologic function and resiliency in a changing climate to an assessed 0.5-mile reach of Crooks Creek by increasing channel and floodplain complexity and engagement, slowing excessive sediment transport and channel incision processes, and improving aquatic organism habitat. A Contractor will use readily available BLM-furnished hazard trees to build LWM structures at key locations according to site-specific designs and specifications.	$ 88,344
225-2002	Rogue River WC	West Fork Trail RM 4.2 and Chicago Creek RM 0.1 Fish Passage Projects	The overarching goal of this project is to replace two undersized culverts on two different creeks with structures that will allow for natural stream processes to occur, and for individuals to move freely during times of the year when access to cold water and rearing habitat is critical, ultimately improving reproductive success of adult Coho Salmon, steelhead, and other resident salmonids and aquatic species. This project will result in access to a combined 5 miles of important habitat.	$ 298,831
225-2011	Pacific Forest Trust	Mount Ashland Forest Climate Resilience Restoration Project (Second Submission Attempt)	The goal of the restoration at our project site(s) is to increase long-term ecological resilience, increase watershed function, restore the critical ecological process of mixed severity fire, and enhance wildlife habitat quality and connectivity across the Project Area.	$ 258,999
Total Restoration Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 1,770,243**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
225-2003	Smith River WC	Crane Creek: Concrete Weir Removal & Fish Passage Restoration	The goal of this restoration project is to restore natural a flow regime and improve fish passage at the West Fork Smith River and Crane Creek confluence. Meeting or exceeding state and federal fish passage criteria. This project has been designed specifically to provide passage under all flow conditions and life stages. Passage to over 40 miles of spawning and rearing habitat will be improved, the majority of which ODFW has evaluated as having highest or higher coho intrinsic habitat potential.	$ 357,000
225-2012	Coos SWCD	Albertson-Gatov Working Landscapes Restoration Project	The goal of this project is to maximize ecological function of tidal habitats on private lands which have been historically modified and converted for agriculture. This project seeks to continue the pattern of tidal habitat restoration on working lands along the Lower Coquille river, ensuring juvenile salmonid/fish access into these critical rearing and overwinter refugia areas, and resolving water quality issues over time by restoring riparian buffers and excluding livestock from waterways.	$ 288,103

225-2015	Coquille Watershed Association	Dement Creek Cultural Monitoring & Instream LWD Inflation	The goal for this project is to support the completion of the Dement Creek Whole Watershed project, specifically, Objective #1: Construct instream wood and boulder structures at 17 sites in mainstem lower Dement Creek. This project will provide for cultural needs to protect resources during wood structure installation and adjust for inflation since 2021 to ensure material and contracting funds are adequate to complete the objective.	$ 208,616
225-2010	Applegate Partnership, Inc.	Hamilton Road Invasive Species Removal (2025)	Our primary goal is to restore the riparian habitat by removing invasive species and reestablishing native tree and shrubs plant communities. This restoration will 1) reduce fire risk to landowners and natural resources, 2) increase species richness and biodiversity while allowing riparian areas to progress through succession unimpeded, and 3) increase shade within the riparian area creating more suitable temperatures for salmon and other riparian species.	$ 550,994

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
225-2001	Douglas SWCD	Buckhorn Creek Ag water quality and riparian restoration project.	$ 59,072
225-2007	Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers	Cougar Creek Fish Passage Improvement	$ 421,894
225-2008	Applegate Partnership, Inc.	Upper Applegate All-Lands Wildfire Resiliency Project	$ 290,233
225-2009	Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers	Archie Creek Post-Fire Riparian Restoration - Rock Creek	$ 298,228
225-2013	Josephine County Public Works	Fruitdale Drive Fish Passage Enhancement	$ 696,409
225-2014	Coquille Watershed Association	Lower North Fork Riparian Restoration Phase II: Streambank Stabilization	$ 423,813

Region 2 - Southwest Oregon Technical Assistance

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-2016	Trout Unlimited Inc	MID NF and SF Little Butte Cr Fish Passage Project	The Project's goal is to increase recruitment into populations of ESA-listed SONCC Coho Salmon, fall Chinook Salmon, summer and winter steelhead trout, and Pacific Lamprey in Little Butte Creek watershed by developing designs for fish passage at two diversions, MID North Fork and MID South Fork Little Butte Dams. This will improve access to over 30 miles of high quality for adult and juvenile fish and contribute to long term native species population viability.	$ 160,458
225-2021	Applegate Partnership, Inc.	Applegate River Mile 25 Side Channel Design (Fall 2024)	The primary goal is to develop preliminary engineered designs for the restoration of a 0.65 mile remnant side channel along the Applegate River. The secondary goal is to complete a complementary riparian restoration planting plan along the side channel and the river. By restoring these areas, we aim to improve overall stream condition and function and create a more resilient ecosystem that benefits native fish and wildlife species.	$ 153,331
225-2019	Coquille Watershed Association	Middle Creek Basin Assessment and Project Development	This project aims to address assessment needs outlined in the short-term actions of the Coquille Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery (Coquille SAP) by conducting a robust Middle Creek basin assessment. This will identify priority projects throughout the HUC-6 basin that target stressors such as altered riparian function, water quality, instream complexity, and longitudinal connectivity. The project will also fill data gaps for other watershed species at risk of ESA listing.	$ 130,726
Total Technical Assistance Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 444,515**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
225-2018	Trout Unlimited Inc	Butte Creek Mill Fish Passage and Flow Restoration Project	The goal is to increase recruitment into populations of ESA-listed SONCC coho salmon, fall chinook salmon, summer and winter steelhead trout, and Pacific lamprey in Little Butte Creek watershed by developing designs for fish passage and screening at Butte Creek Mill Dam and identifying opportunities to conserve water and dedicate it instream. This will improve access to over 40 miles of high quality for adult and juvenile fish and contribute to long term native species population viability.	$ 87,054
225-2020	Curry SWCD	Bagley Creek Restoration Design	The Bagley Creek Restoration project is a unique opportunity to comprehensively restore 2,100 feet of stream corridor in a manner that addresses the principal limiting factors to coho salmon in the Elk River watershed. The goal of this TA grant is to coordinate with WRLT and complete pre-implementation tasks (a 'construction-ready' design, a cultural resources assessment, project permits, contracting, etc.), so the restoration project is ready to implement in 2027.	$ 129,472
225-2017	Trout Unlimited Inc	Brophy Ditch Big Butte Creek Flow Restoration Project	The Project's goal is to increase recruitment into populations of federally listed as threatened SONCC Coho Salmon, state-listed Spring Chinook Salmon, summer and winter Steelhead Trout, and Pacific Lamprey in Nork Fork Big Butte and Big Butte Creeks. We seek to improve instream flow and improve water quantity and quality in Nork Fork Big Butte and Big Butte Creeks and contribute to long term native species population viability.	$ 86,714
225-2023	Siskiyou Field Institute	Deer Creek Historical Floodplain Reconnection Project	This project aims to develop a comprehensive restoration design for a 140-acre meadow complex comprising 1 mile of Deer Creek and 1.5 miles of its tributaries. This design will address fish passage, invasive species, habitat complexity, and riparian health to improve survival rates of native species like coho salmon. The project provides a blueprint for implementing actions that enhance ecosystem resilience, water quality, and habitat connectivity, directly leading to site-specific restoration.	$ 27,500
225-2022	Coquille Watershed Association	Sandy Creek Phase II Engineering & Design	The goal of the Sandy Creek Phase II Engineering and Design TA is to support implementation of the Sandy Creek Whole Watershed Phase II project by funding culvert engineering, archeology investigation, and capacity for staff to continue project design and outreach.	$ 106,587

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
N/A			

Region 2 - Southwest Oregon Engagement

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
N/A				
Total Engagement Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ -**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order				
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Project Goal (From Application)**	**Amount Recommended**
225-2025	Trout Unlimited Inc	Rogue Basin Flow Restoration Stakeholder Engagement Project	To engage the water user community and partner with other restoration practitioners in order to increase the pace and scale of flow restoration in the Rogue Basin and increase the participation of priority stakeholders in voluntary, incentivized flow restoration projects. These projects will by develop a better balance of instream and out of stream water use in the face of a changing climate and increased drought frequency.	$ 223,796
225-2026	OSU Office of Sponsored Research & Award Admin	Stakeholder engagement for Bandon's drinking water source watersheds	The goal of engagement is for project team members and landowners within Bandon's drinking water source watersheds to better understand the watershed hydrology and management challenges that contribute to sediment pollution and low streamflow. Team members are then equipped to provide technical and financial resources to landowners, and landowners are prepared to implement practices and actions that improve water quality and quantity.	$ 62,839

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT			
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Amount Requested**
225-2024	The Beaver Coalition	New Partnerships for "Beavered" Habitat in the Rogue Basin	$ 54,175

Region 2 Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$2,214,758**

Region 1 - 6 Grand Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$13,355,571**

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2001-23880
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Buckhorn Creek Ag water quality and riparian restoration project.
Applicant: Douglas SWCD
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Douglas
OWEB Request: $59,072
Total Cost: $79,899

Application Description The project is located along Buckhorn creek in the Little River watershed a tributary to the North Umpqua. T27S-R04W-S01 And is just over the ridge from the Fall creek project site also in the Little River Watershed.

The project area is located on an historic cattle ranch with pastures on the east and west side of the creek that are hayed and grazed. In the east pasture the only water source is in the creek. The bank at the watering area is highly erodible and sediment and manure enter the stream as the cattle enter to drink. Although there are some native trees along the banks edge non-native invasive blackberries have heavily invaded the riparian under-story and out competed the native vegetation and the stream is deeply incised. Livestock have had full access to the riparian areas on both sides of the riparian areas.

The SWCD under the ODA Ag water quality grant which seeks to improve Ag water quality wherever possible with willing landowners. The proposed project seeks to improve Ag water quality and habitat conditions by livestock exclusion, providing an alternative water source, improve degraded riparian conditions and reduce overall Ag runoff and bank erosion as well as improve habitat conditions for fish and wildlife.

Practices are to continue livestock exclusion fencing along the west side of Buckhorn creek, install an in-stream spring box to solar pump water up to a trough on a heavy use pad on the east side of Buckhorn, remove invasive blackberries along both west and east banks to allow natural regeneration and also place supplemental planting through stake creation and placement of native shrubs for bank stability and restore the riparian to a better functioning system.

At this time the SWCD is in collaboration with ODFW for a possible in-stream improvement project to help build back up the heavily incised creek with the installations of Beaver Dam Analogs, BDAs. The BDA project is in the assessment phase.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The proposed actions include excluding livestock from Buckhorn Creek, providing an out of channel livestock water source, and establishing native plants in the riparian area after removing invasive plant species. These efforts will reduce sediment and bacteria loading and increase vegetative stream cover that can contribute to lowering water temperatures.
- The restoration actions will implement measures to improve water quality that are identified in the Umpqua Basin Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan and the Total Maximum Daily Load Water Quality Management Plan.
- Alternative design options were evaluated before selecting the proposed strategy.
- The landowner support for the project is demonstrated through active involvement in the design process and commitment to maintain the long-term ecological outcomes of the restoration. The project approach fits into the landowner's management objectives for the property.
- The project provides outreach opportunities through tours to raise awareness among neighboring agricultural landowners that could lead to future restoration.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project.

Concerns

- The application lacks details describing how the fence setbacks will be sufficient to restore riparian and stream function. There is not enough technical information to understand whether the riparian buffer size will be sufficient to achieve ecological uplift needed to meet the revised temperature Total Maximum Daily Loads.
- It is unclear how stock watering could occur in the event the stream dries up. The stock water exemption to water rights only applies to water on the owner's property, making the legal connection to use water from the neighbor's upstream reservoir unclear.
- The watering system does not include a storage tank between the intake and the trough. This leaves no mechanism for providing water in case the stream goes dry or the pump fails.
- Detail describing the location and timing for when the stream goes dry would be helpful to understand the potential year-round impacts the project would have on water quality. While water quality monitoring is not part of the proposal, the data could provide a clearer understanding of the site and measure the progress of restoration actions towards improving water quality.

Concluding Analysis

Installing measures that improve water quality on working agricultural lands is important for restoring the health of stream systems. Developing projects that meet that goal and provide engagement opportunities for neighboring landowners is vital to achieve meaningful long-term ecological uplift. The application lacks information needed to determine whether the project approach will achieve the proposed restoration objectives. If the application is resubmitted, the applicant is encouraged to provide

information on summer stream flows, how the proposed riparian buffer will be sufficient to restore riparian functions and improve water quality, and how the landowner will be able to access water for the livestock during the summer months.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/a

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2002-23928
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: West Fork Trail RM 4.2 and Chicago Creek RM 0.1 Fish Passage Projects
Applicant: Rogue River WC
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Jackson
OWEB Request: $298,831
Total Cost: $1,378,599

Application Description This project is located near Trail, Oregon, in Jackson County. Two road/stream crossings on a single gravel road (one on West Fork Trail Creek and the other on Chicago Creek) are restricting the freedom of movement and access to 5 miles of suitable habitat, delaying Coho Salmon, steelhead/Rainbow Trout, and Cutthroat Trout adults on their way to spawning habitat and blocking juvenile salmonids moving upstream to seek cool water refuge during summer. Currently, the road/stream crossings are undersized culverts with pronounced scour at the downstream “lip.” Passage conditions for fish will continue to degrade over the coming years as rushing water during freshets continues to scour the stream bottom downstream of each culvert.

The project area is identified in the Upper Rogue Coho Strategic Action Plan, developed by the Rogue River Watershed Council (RRWC) with partners to address limiting factors and stressors within five key watersheds throughout the Rogue River Basin. Through this project, RRWC will work with private timber companies, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the Wild Salmon Center (WSC), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Restoration Center to design, construct, and monitor new road/stream crossings that do not impact fish movement. RRWC expects the new road/stream crossings to be appropriately-sized and properly-angled road stream crossing structures, spanning or fit into the existing streambeds. Public awareness is also an essential component to promote restoration efforts and generate an increased interest through media outlets and project tours.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application describes clear actions for replacing two undersized culverts on West Fork Trail and Chicago creeks to restore natural stream processes and fish access to cold water habitat.
- Habitat limiting factors impacting Southern Oregon Northern California Coast Endangered Species Act-listed (SONCC) coho will be addressed. The West Fork Trail Creek is designated as a critical habitat area in the National Marine Fisheries Service’s Final Recovery Plan for SONCC coho and lack of passage through culverts is identified as a high stress for juvenile coho.

- The stream system above the project provides cool water refugia essential for rearing and habitat to other aquatic species, such as amphibians and Pacific lamprey.
- Design alternatives were identified and evaluated.
- The applicant and partners have a long history of collaboration in the design and implementation of fish passage and habitat restoration projects. The project builds on five miles of instream habitat restoration efforts.
- Landowner and project partner support is demonstrated by letters attached to the application and match contribution.
- Culverts will be replaced with a bridge that meets the 1.5 bank full width fish passage requirements from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Concerns

- The distinction between proposed and implemented restoration actions is unclear in the maps included in the application. Including detail that separates completed projects from planned future restoration would be helpful to understand the two project phases.
- The project designs are at 65% complete; costs could increase as the project design nears 100% and there may not be sufficient funds to implement the project.
- The costs associated with archeological surveys may not be sufficient for the number of sites.

Concluding Analysis

West Fork Trail Creek is one of the five focal areas of the Upper Rogue Coho Strategic Action Plan, and the project implements priority actions identified in that plan. Restoring ecological stream processes and access to high-quality spawning and rearing habitat for adult and juvenile fish is critical to protecting and restoring salmonid populations.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$298,831

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$298,831

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2003-23934
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Crane Creek: Concrete Weir Removal & Fish Passage Restoration
Applicant: Smith River WC
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Douglas
OWEB Request: $357,000
Total Cost: $525,000

Application Description This project seeks to improve adult and juvenile salmonid passage to over 40 miles of spawning and rearing habitat upstream of the project location. This will be accomplished by the removal of two concrete channel-spanning weirs that currently function as a partial barrier at a variety of flows to multiple life-cycle stages of native salmonid. The legacy structure will be replaced with an engineered riffle/nature-like fishway that is designed specifically to allow upstream passage of native salmonids at all life-cycle stages, and during the greatest range of flows. Crane Creek is located 36 miles east of the city of Reedsport, in the central Smith River Basin.
At the confluence of Crane Creek and the West Fork Smith River, two concrete weirs were installed to backwater the Crane Creek culvert in the early 1970's. The Crane Creek culvert was subsequently replaced in 1979 and again in 2003 with a bottomless arch with concrete footings. The concrete weirs function as barriers to both adult and juvenile salmonid passage during a variety of flow conditions. Removing the concrete weirs and installing a nature-like fishway will improve fish passage at the culvert and on the main stem of the West Fork Smith, while retaining substrate present within the culvert. Additionally, the constructed fishway will reduce downstream impacts from resulting substrate movement towards the ODFW Lifecycle Monitoring Project Trap sites 2.5 mile downstream. SRWC and our multi-agency working group have received and approved final design from River Design Group for the implementation of this project. Project partners include: The Smith River Watershed Council, Coos Bay District Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Roseburg Resource Co., and River Design Group.
NEPA has been completed for this project, ODFW has approved the Fish Passage Application, and all boulders have been purchased and staged near the project area.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by including a map illustrating the project in context with completed restoration efforts within the West Fork Smith River watershed.
- The project is ready for implementation with designs at 100% completeness. The construction approach includes plans for a low impact staging area with considerations for maintaining the stream pool area at the top of the site and minimizing impacts to adjacent riparian areas.

- The design approach is technically sound by including consideration of stream size and velocity as well as design alternatives. The project is likely to restore stream and floodplain function along with maintaining existing pool characteristics at the project site.
- The restoration will target critical habitat for Oregon Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho, Chinook, and steelhead by improving access to important spawning and rearing habitats above the project reach.
- The overall project cost is reasonable for the expected watershed health benefits from increasing the amount of habitat made accessible to all life stages of salmonids.
- The applicant and design contractor have experience solving fish passage issues in the Smith River watershed.
- Improving fish passage will leverage significant investments in instream improvements implemented throughout the watershed by providing unimpeded access to restored stream habitat.
- The West Fork Smith River has an established Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Life Cycle Monitoring site that provides a long-term data set documenting fish usage. This information will be used to illustrate the impacts from improving fish passage on salmonid populations as well as correlate past restoration with life cycle monitoring to help understand the effectiveness of restoration strategies.

Concerns

- Additional narrative in the application describing the amount of habitat located above the project site would be helpful for understanding the quantified watershed benefit expected from the proposed restoration.
- Information describing how the proposed restoration and location was prioritized for implementation would be helpful for understanding the importance of the project.
- The bedrock substrate could make riffle construction challenging with the force of stream flow in this system known to move large materials. There is potential for materials used for the constructed fishway to move downstream during high flows.

Concluding Analysis

A natural flow regime and fish passage under all flow conditions and life stages will be restored at the West Fork Smith River and Crane Creek confluence. Addressing man-made fish passage impediments restores natural ecosystems processes beneficial to aquatic life, including improved sediment transfer, access to spawning habitat, expanded forage opportunities, and access to thermal refugia during summer months.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

6 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$357,000

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2004-23943
Project Name: Crooks Creek Large Wood Placement
Applicant: Illinois Valley WC
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $88,344

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Josephine
Total Cost: $123,416

Application Description 1) Project Location: Instream within Crooks Creek on BLM-managed public lands approximately 7 miles East of the town of Selma. Specifically, the project reach adjoins and the work will fully complement the 1.5-mile downstream reach that was successfully treated in 2023 with Large Woody Material structures by these partners. The 2023 project included work done on private lands with partnering landowners.

2) Project Need: Crooks Creek is listed as one of the tributaries with high Intrinsic (habitat) Potential for SONCC Coho salmon in the Final SONCC Coho Recovery Plan (NOAA, 2014). The Plan identifies key limiting stresses as altered hydrologic function and degraded riparian forest conditions and lists increasing large woody debris, boulders, and instream structure and reconnecting floodplains, wetlands, and off-channel habitat and reducing road-stream hydrologic connection as highest priority recovery actions this project directly addresses (p.30-1).

3) Proposed Work: The project seeks to increase storage capacity and floodplain connectivity and restore aquatic habitat conditions by constructing 13 engineered LWM structures instream using approximately 52 logs and other available LWM pieces along a 0.5-mile reach of Crooks Creek. The proposed work – in conjunction with the extensive work accomplished in 2023 immediately downstream of the project reach – is considered vital to fully realizing desired instream LWM levels for the watershed. Proposed work will complement extensive BLM completed and planned restoration treatments elsewhere in the Deer Creek watershed Crooks Creek directly contributes to.

4) Project Partners: Include the Medford District BLM (Grants Pass Field Office), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), OR Department of State Lands (ODSL), OR Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), OR Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), Josephine County Planning Department, and the applicant.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application concerns are addressed with the inclusion of stream photos from adjoining properties and information describing the riparian areas in the project area.

- The instream winter and summer habitat in Crooks Creek is important for steelhead, Southern Oregon Northern California Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho, and cutthroat in the Illinois basin.
- The application presents a clear connection between climate change concerns and the project goal of restoring natural stream processes that build climate resilience.
- The project approach is technically sound with materials and placement approaches tailored to site conditions with an emphasis on low impact to the riparian area during implementation.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to oversee the project.
- The project team has a consistent track record for implementing high-quality large wood placement projects in similar stream conditions.
- The project is ready for implementation with final designs and permits in place along with materials and contractors secured.

Concerns

- The application lacks details describing specific individual site log placement information.

Concluding Analysis

The installation of large wood will improve spawning and rearing habitat for Southern Oregon Northern California Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho and other aquatic organisms. The large wood structures will increase the sinuosity and complexity of stream channel characteristics and improve floodplain and stream function.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$88,344

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$88,344

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2005-23950
Project Name: Big Creek Wetland Restoration
Applicant: Cascade Pacific RC&D
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $681,615

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Coos
Total Cost: $1,675,038

Application Description

The Tenmile Lakes, a chain of freshwater lakes on the southern Oregon coast identified as one of the premiere habitats for that supports one of the few fisheries for wild Coho salmon and coastal cutthroat trout. These populations decimated over the past several decades due to loss of habitat and poor water quality from 90% loss of the wetlands that buffer the lake and provide important habitat for juvenile fish. Big Creek which flows into Big Creek Arm, North Tenmile Lake, is the second largest tributary (11.3miles) in the Tenmile Lakes Watershed. The Tenmile Lakes TMDL and Tenmile Lakes Native Fisheries and Water Quality Restoration Plan, identified the Big Creek Subbasin as the highest priority for wetland restoration. Big Creek is an example of a managed stream which has been channelized and the wetlands removed for agricultural use. Big Creek is confined to its channel for a longer period of time and transports more sediment to the lakes than do streams with improved connectivity to adjoining wetlands. Restoring a permanent wetland at this location will dramatically improve the water quality as well as fish and wildlife habitat in the Big Creek Subbasin. With our Project Partners that include the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw (CTCLUSI), ODFW, ODEQ, and Porior Engineering, The Tenmile Lakes Basin Partnership (TLBP) is going to restore 77 acres of agricultural land to a functioning wetland, engineered and permitted to improve habitat for native fish and wildlife species while also improving stream and lake water quality. Construction of the wetland will be completed by September 2025. Wetland Plantings will take place November through March of 2025/2026 and 2026/2027. Once completed, the property title will be transferred to CTCLUSI for stewardship. This project is shovel ready with needed OWEB funding matched with secured National Fish and Wildlife Foundation funding and in-kind donations for project management and construction.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The solution section of the application has a clear goal and actions for restoring 77 acres of agricultural land into a naturally functioning wetland.
- The project is ready for implementation with secured permits, match funding, and final designs in place.
- The project design method is modeled after a nearby wetland creation project located at the confluence of Big Creek with the South Tenmile Lake that has a similar scale and design approach.

- The overall project cost is reasonable for the expected watershed health benefits.
- The project is consistent with the goals within the Tenmile Lakes Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and associated management plan that calls for the creation of properly engineered systems of wetlands for non-point source pollution control.
- The project implements strategies from the National Marine Fisheries Service Final Endangered Species Act Plan Recovery Plan for Oregon Coast Coho Salmon by restoring watershed processes to increase rearing habitat quality and capacity.
- The project property will be transferred to the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, which will provide capacity for long-term stewardship of the restoration investment.

Concerns

- It is unclear if the archeological consultation is finished. If it has not completed, it could impact the project timeline.
- Long-term invasive vegetation management will be difficult without the ability to use herbicides.
- The wetland will be constructed by excavating soils to a depth below the canary reed grass root systems followed by grading the site, which will create a large volume of dirt and organic material that must be moved to an upslope disposal location. It is not clear if there is a backup location for the removed material if the primary location becomes full.

Concluding Analysis

Wetland ecosystems are now exceedingly rare in the Tenmile Lakes watershed with less than 1% remaining. This elevates the re-establishment of 77 acres of wetland habitat to a high priority. The project will restore natural wetland functions and benefit the Oregon Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho salmon, Pacific lamprey, and western pond turtles as well as nesting and over-wintering waterfowl. is completed, the property ownership will be transferred to the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians for stewardship.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$681,615

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$681,615

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2006-23953
Project Name: Rogue Rearing Habitat Implementation
Applicant: Curry SWCD
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $442,454

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Curry
Total Cost: $1,295,354

Application Description The proposed implementation work occurs in the Rogue River estuary, and consists of constructing new tidal and intertidal slough channel salmonid habitat on Elephant Bar located within the Rogue River Estuary. The project site is owned and operated as a gravel mining operation by Freeman Rock, LLC and is located between the Rogue River and God Wants You (GWY) Slough along the south bank of the river near River Mile 2.6. The portion of Elephant Bar occupied by the gravel mining pit currently experiences flow only during winter runoff events and is almost completely lacking in vegetation cover or large wood. In contrast, the adjacent GWY Slough provides excellent low-velocity rearing habitat for juvenile salmonids, contains good riparian cover, and has some natural large wood elements as well as numerous large wood structures that were installed by the LRWC as part of a previous restoration project (supported by OWEB previously).

The principal goal of this project is to extend the high-value habitat of GWY Slough into the central portion of Elephant Bar through excavation of new slough channels. Instream structure, complexity, and shelter will be created through development of diverse geomorphic features and incorporation of large wood structures, and a diverse assemblage of riparian vegetation will be established which will promote shading and cooler water temperatures. Additional project goals are to ensure continued connectivity and fish passage between created slough channels and GWY Slough and to avoid post-project habitat degradation due to excessive erosion or deposition to the extent possible.

Project partners include O'Connor Environmental, Curry SWCD, Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians, Nvn-nes-'a Land Trust, BLM, and USFS.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clear goal and actions for creating new tidally influenced off-channel habitat on Elephant Bar, located within the Rogue River estuary.
- The Rogue River estuary is small, any opportunity for increasing slough-like habitats that improves tidal exchange and creates rearing habitat for salmonids will provide significant ecological benefit for the cost.

- The proposed restoration will benefit fall and spring Chinook and Southern Oregon Northern California Coast (SONCC) Endangered Species Act-listed coho.
- The project is ready for implementation in Summer 2025 with designs at 99% complete.
- The project will create 11 acres of wetlands that could sequester carbon.
- The applicant and project team have a long history of collaboration in the design and implementation of estuary habitat restoration projects. The project builds on adjacent estuarine wetland creation and connection restoration.
- The landowner commitment to restoration is demonstrated by active involvement in all aspects of the project development and implementation.
- The project area is part of a gravel extraction operation. The channels were sited primarily within the existing gravel pit to minimize the required excavation depths and disturbance to existing vegetation. The gravel extraction will be discontinued following the channel construction.
- The Lower Rogue Watershed Council and Curry Soil and Water Conservation District have established connections to the landowners and community.
- Similar restoration actions have been completed on the adjacent property, which has an established system of interpretive trails that is increasing community awareness of restoration.

Concerns

- Plans for the long-term ownership of the project site and stewardship to maintain restoration values is unclear.
- The design approach reduces the amount of wood that will be used for large wood structures compared to previous restoration to minimize impacts to the river. The location, however, would likely support placement of additional wood to increase habitat. Since the previous large wood placement efforts have been stable, it is likely the project site will have a similar response to larger wood placement numbers.
- The creation of the channel and pond features will be done as part of the gravel extraction operation. Larger gravels will be removed for their commercial value, leaving smaller materials that may not sort or stabilize as well without the larger gravels. This could potentially limit the ecological uplift from restoration.
- The number of hours and hourly rate for excavation costs are unclear because they are lumped into one contractor line item in the budget.

Concluding Analysis

Lack of suitable habitat for the juvenile rearing is the leading limiting factor for salmonids in the Lower

Rogue River. The small estuarine reach of the Rogue River plays a critical role in the growth and survival of these species as well as of green and white sturgeon and Pacific lamprey. The project is a high priority due to the rarity of the habitat that will be restored and its importance to the recovery of SONCC Endangered Species Act-listed coho.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$442,454

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$442,454

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2007-23962
Project Name: Cougar Creek Fish Passage Improvement
Applicant: Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $421,894

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Douglas
Total Cost: $534,246

Application Description The Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers (PUR), Roseburg Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) are partnering to improve fish passage and instream habitat in tributaries of Cougar Creek, located in the Upper Umpqua Watershed (HUC 17100303). The Cougar Creek Watershed consists of 14 miles of fish-bearing streams supporting Oregon Coast coho, winter steelhead trout, Pacific lamprey, and coastal cutthroat trout. The Upper Umpqua Watershed Assessment and Action Plan (2006) noted that Cougar Creek possesses moderate to high-quality instream habitat. Still, fish passage barriers currently restrict access to essential portions of the watershed.

This project will utilize engineering designs completed in 2024 to replace two fish passage barriers in East Fork Cougar Creek and a nearby tributary to East Fork Cougar Creek. These two barriers currently block access to a combined 2.0 miles of salmon spawning and rearing habitat. The project will also repurpose fourteen incidental trees removed during the installation of the new culverts to build three instream structures downstream of the new culverts. The results of this project will provide access to 2 miles of anadromous fish habitat, restore hydrologic function, and increase instream complexity in this important watershed.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project is ready for implementation with completed designs for replacing the culverts on East Fork Cougar Creek.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project.
- There are no barriers below the project site.
- Replacing the culverts will allow fish to access cool water refugia upstream during the summer months when the cooler water is critical to juvenile salmonid survival. The new larger culverts will lead to improved stream function and material transport.
- There is quality instream habitat downstream of the culverts that has intact riparian vegetation and evidence of coho spawning.

- The applicant is engaging appropriate partners, and their support is documented in project materials donations and involvement in technical support.

Concerns

- Project costs are provided as lumped sums that lack detail needed to understand staff time associated with the proposed tasks and evaluate whether costs are reasonable, necessary, and adequate for achieving the proposed restoration actions.
- Additional technical information is needed to understand whether the culverts will be sufficient for passing large wood. While the culvert height is provided, the width is unclear.
- The maps lack labels identifying tributary names needed to understand the map orientation.
- The stream gradient above the culvert seems too steep for fish to access and use. Including information on fish presence in Cougar Creek would be helpful for understanding how the project can open 2 miles of useable rearing habitat.
- It is unclear if the culverts are identified on the ODFW fish passage barrier list.
- It is unclear from the application how the proposed fish passage restoration is a priority compared to addressing other habitat limiting factors.
- Including information in the application describing how the project will build on other restoration in the Cougar Creek watershed would be helpful to understand how the project fits within the context of past and planned future restoration.
- Incorporating outreach to private and industrial timber landowners early in the restoration planning process could facilitate development of future project opportunities.

Concluding Analysis

Improving fish access to cool water habitats and improving stream transport processes is important to recovery of Oregon Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho. The two undersized culverts in the East Fork Cougar Creek are disrupting the natural hydrology and affecting fish passage. The ecological uplift for the cost of the project is uncertain. Information explaining the culvert priority, stream gradient, and habitat conditions above the culverts is needed to understand the project cost benefit.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2008-23963
Project Name: Upper Applegate All-Lands Wildfire Resiliency Project
Applicant: Applegate Partnership, Inc.
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $290,233

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Jackson
Total Cost: $2,300,233

Application Description Forest conditions across the Applegate Valley, in Jackson County, Oregon, are significantly departed from their historic state due to climate change driving longer and hotter drought periods, which is rapidly accelerating tree mortality and increasing the risk of uncharacteristically severe wildfire. Historically, fire has played an integral role in the development of the forest environment and the shaping of plant communities in this area. Forest ecosystems in this region are not only adapted to frequent fire disturbances, but dependent upon them to reduce biomass, recycle nutrients, regulate plant succession, maintain wildlife habitat and biological diversity, and control insects and disease. Over a century of fire exclusion has increased fuel loads in the forests, creating a trend toward higher-intensity, stand-replacing fires. Additionally, as the population of southwestern Oregon has expanded, so has the number of people and homes present in woodland areas and in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), increasing the risk to life, property, and the surrounding landscape.
The Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council (APWC) has built the Upper Applegate All-Lands Wildfire Resiliency Project (UAAWRP) to provide technical and financial assistance for landowners to address these threats. Building on APWC’s existing efforts to update the area's Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and implement its 20-year resiliency strategy, OWEB restoration funding would bring critical support to private forestlands in the valley and complement investments on adjacent federal lands. These actions will help small forest landowners achieve climate and wildfire resiliency and address pressing issues related to fuel loading, tree mortality, and overstocked woodlands. Project partners include: Applegate Valley Fire District (AVFD), National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), among others.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project builds on the applicant’s Upper Applegate All-Lands Wildfire Resiliency Project (UAAWRP) that began implementation in 2024 and is funded by National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). The UAAWRP is guided by the Rogue Basin Cohesive Strategy, a 20-year plan to reduce the threat of severe wildfires and promote forest climate adaptation by reducing risks to natural resources and communities.

- A century of fire exclusion in the project area will be addressed by treating fuels in a targeted range of private properties. This is expected to decrease the threat and likelihood of severe fire in an area with some the largest Douglas Fir die off in the region.
- The project addresses the need to treat forest health issues on a larger scale. The approach focuses on private forest lands and complements efforts on adjacent federal lands, which will build on the neighboring projects to create a contiguous treatment area.
- These actions will help small forest landowners address pressing issues related to fuel loading, tree mortality, and overstocked woodlands in areas where residents in disadvantaged communities can face greater challenges to reduce and maintain fuel loads on their properties.
- The project leverages NRCS funding that provides financial and technical assistance for mechanical fuels treatment by funding implementation at locations that cannot utilize the NRCS funds.
- The proposed restoration actions will build forest resilience to climate change.
- The applicant has built trust with small acreage landowners in the project area.
- The landowners are engaged and motivated to thin overly dense forests after the Slater Fire. Landowner and project partner commitments are evident through secured match contributions, participation in planning efforts, and letters of support in the application.

Concerns

- The connection between the proposed actions for preventing catastrophic wildfire and restoring watershed functions is unclear. Additional information explaining the quantified watershed benefits to wildlife, plant communities, aquatic habitats, and water quality and quantity from the fuel reduction treatments would be helpful for understanding the expected ecological outcomes. For example, some treatments planned appear to focus solely on protecting infrastructure and is unlikely to provide a habitat benefit.
- There is no long-term plan described for maintaining the properties after the treatments, it is unclear what strategies will be used to retain the restoration investment. It is unclear whether future prescribe fire to maintain sites as described in the application is feasible due to concerns about risks in the Wildland Urban Interface.
- Additional detail on how the cost per acre of the mechanical treatment is estimated is needed to understand the cost benefit of the treatment approach.
- The applicant may not have enough relevant experience for writing forest management prescriptions.

- It is unclear how OWEB and NRCS funds will be leveraged to fund forest treatments. The application indicates the project will occur on private forestlands and OWEB funding will be used for sites not eligible for NRCS funds, which would be public lands. It is unclear whether treatment will occur on public lands or how funding on private lands will be integrated without overlapping investments.

Concluding Analysis

Strategically thinning overly dense forests will reduce fuels within the Wildland Urban Interface and help reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire. The proposed treatments focus more on the human factor and protecting properties; it is unclear how watershed processes and the health of terrestrial, plant, and aquatic habitats will benefit from the project.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2009-24005
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Archie Creek Post-Fire Riparian Restoration - Rock Creek
Applicant: Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Douglas
OWEB Request: $298,228
Total Cost: $418,273

Application Description The 2020 Archie Creek Fire devastated the Rock Creek Watershed, resulting in an over 70% loss of riparian trees and shrubs that are crucial for protecting stream health and salmonid habitat. Since then, noxious weeds like Himalayan blackberry, scotch broom, and thistles have established in the riparian zone, interrupting the natural regeneration of native riparian plants. The limited regeneration of native species that has taken place post-fire, such as basal sprouting of maples, will be overtaken by invasives if no intervention occurs. To address this, the proposed Archie Creek Post-Fire Riparian Restoration - Rock Creek aims to rebuild a resilient, native riparian plant community within the Rock Creek watershed, an important salmon-producing tributary of the North Umpqua River. The project will restore a total of 50 acres of riparian habitat bordering 2.73 miles of stream with a focus on controlling noxious weeds and establishing a variety of native trees, shrubs, and grasses.

The proposed five-year restoration project will improve the health of the Rock Creek watershed and benefit multiple Strategy Species covered in the Oregon Conservation Strategy (OCS), including Fall Chinook, coastal cutthroat trout, Pacific lamprey, and the Oregon Coast coho salmon ESU (threatened). The restored riparian zone will provide shade to regulate stream temperatures, add woody debris to enhance habitat complexity and food webs, stabilize fire-damaged stream banks to reduce sediment input, and filter runoff to protect water quality.

OWEB funds will be used to hire experienced contractors to conduct noxious weed control, native plantings, plant watering, purchase native trees and shrubs, and for PUR staff to coordinate, monitor, and complete the project. The project is a collaboration between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Ash Creek Forest Management (ACFM), Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers (PUR), and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by describing other restoration occurring in the watershed and the status of natural plant regeneration in the area. Substantial instream restoration has occurred in the project area, but riparian areas are being overtaken by invasives, and summer water temperatures have increased following the Archie Creek Fire.

- The proposed solution in the application has a clear goal and actions for site preparation and planting activities that will encompass a total of 50 acres that borders 2.73 stream miles.
- The proposed riparian restoration will benefit multiple strategy species described in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, including Chinook, steelhead, coastal cutthroat trout, Pacific lamprey, and Oregon Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho.
- Tree species for the planting will include ponderosa pine. While it does not typically thrive in Southwest Oregon, it may have adaption to climate change that could benefit the planting outcomes.
- The applicant's restoration riparian specialist will identify sites that are most suitable for ensuring planting survival, employing a more strategic approach rather than a mass planting.
- Pre and post fire fish and stream temperature monitoring data has been collected that will provide a baseline for tracking the success of the restoration efforts in the watershed.
- The project is near a popular recreation and camping area, making it highly visible and providing an outreach opportunity to raise awareness about watershed restoration.

Concerns

- Previous application evaluation concerns regarding the potential impacts of the harsh dry conditions to plant survival are not adequately addressed. The application lacks information describing how the once-a-year irrigation of the plantings can effectively steward plants to a free-to-grow state.
- It is unclear if the rapid riparian revegetation protocol is appropriate to the project location and site conditions.
- The plant stock will be sourced from areas to the north and may not adapt as well to the hotter and drier conditions at the project location. Seedlings sourced from plant stock from the southern areas may be better suited for present and future climate conditions.
- The project may result in patchy vegetation with invasive plant species growing in between planting sites. This could result in needing a much longer-term commitment to fill in riparian vegetation more completely. It is not clear how likely revegetation efforts in large burn areas are to succeed because there is not a track record for similar projects to learn from. It is unclear how revegetation efforts compare to natural regeneration in achieving goals for the project site.
- The prioritization process for selecting the treatment site is unclear.
- Potential measurable water quality and habitat improvements described in the application may be optimistic for the size of the project footprint.

Concluding Analysis

The 2020 Archie Creek Fire severely burned the Rock Creek watershed, resulting in over 70% loss of

riparian trees and shrubs crucial for protecting stream health and salmonid habitat. Invasive plant species quickly took over the area. Restoring functional riparian areas within the watershed is critical to reducing water temperatures on a stream that currently has no protection from solar radiation following the fire. The current conditions at the site will make riparian planting efforts more challenging. The likelihood of success of the planting approach in achieving plant survival and meeting the restoration goal for the project site is uncertain.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2010-24008
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Hamilton Road Invasive Species Removal (2025)
Applicant: Applegate Partnership, Inc.
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Jackson
OWEB Request: $550,994
Total Cost: $712,594

Application Description The Hamilton Road Invasive Species Removal Project is a reapplication of a 2023 submission (224-2012-23359), which was recommended for funding but fell below the funding line. Its two-mile footprint is entirely within the riparian area between the Applegate River and Hamilton Road and includes public and private lands. The highly visible project, just south of Hwy 238 and approximately 1.5 miles west of Ruch Oregon in Jackson County will treat 35 acres of Applegate River and Forest Creek riparian areas. Creating a project rich in ecological uplift and outreach opportunities

Thickets of Himalayan blackberry along with Tree of Heaven, Black Locust and other noxious weeds and previous mining activities on Forest Creek contribute to the degradation of riparian function reducing conditions favorable to the succession of fire-resistant native riparian vegetation. Lack of both hardwood and conifer recruitment along with understory shrubs such as ninebark and willow lead to elevated summer water temps for observed populations of SONCC Coho and Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, Trout, and Pacific Lamprey. Additionally, this riparian corridor has an increased risk of fire due to dense invasives and transient populations that frequently use the wide roadway shoulder. Such activity has and will contribute to fire and complete destruction of the native riparian vegetation as occurred at the mouth of Forest Creek in July 2023. The project proposes cut and release, maintenance and planting of native vegetation, while limiting vehicular access and transient camping.. This revised application includes minor changes such as the addition of exclusion fencing, adjustments to the planting plan, and budget allocation for cultural resources review.

Project partners include the Jackson County Parks Department, private landowners, Bureau of Land Management, and the Applegate Valley Fire Department. It is leveraged by additional riparian restoration within Cantrall Buckley Park.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed with the addition of exclusion fencing around the project area, adjustment of the planting plan, and inclusion of funds for cultural resources review.

- The project reach contains habitat important to Endangered Species Act-listed Southern Oregon Northern California Coast ESA-listed coho.
- The Applegate River is listed on the 303(d) list for temperature and restoring the riparian zone is a high priority action to address this water quality impairment.
- The applicant is engaging appropriate partners and private landowners, and project support is documented in letters included in the application.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project with a consistent track record for coupling riparian restoration with effective plant stewardship efforts.
- The project builds on adjacent riparian restoration projects, which will create a larger riparian restoration footprint.
- The overall project cost is reasonable for the expected watershed benefits. The application and budget narrative clearly justify the high plant stewardship costs due to employing equipment and manual techniques to address invasive species in the 35-acre project area. This approach addresses community concerns over herbicide use.
- The project will provide opportunity for raising public awareness about invasive plant species and riparian restoration due to wildfire concerns. The high visibility of the project could lead to future restoration opportunities.

Concerns

- Previous application evaluation concerns regarding the lack of reed canary grass treatment on the project site are not addressed. Upstream sources will make eradication difficult.
- The application lacks a description of the effectiveness monitoring actions that will be completed for the funds requested in the budget post project costs.
- Long-term maintenance of blackberries and other invasives will be challenging without the use of herbicides.

Concluding Analysis

Restoring the riparian habitat by removing invasive species and reestablishing native tree and shrub plant communities will help increase species biodiversity, support more natural riparian function, and increase shade within the riparian area. This will create more suitable temperatures for the waterways. The proposed restoration will also help reduce the risk of catastrophic fire to landowners and natural resources.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

9 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$550,994

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2011-24023

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Mount Ashland Forest Climate Resilience Restoration Project (Second Submission Attempt)

Applicant: Pacific Forest Trust

Region: Southwest Oregon

County: Jackson

OWEB Request: $270,773

Total Cost: $342,988

Application Description The Project builds upon the successful 2022 completion of Pacific Forest Trust's (PFT's) Mount Ashland Climate Resilience Project land acquisition, made with generous support from OWEB. We are now seeking restoration funding to begin implementing our comprehensive Management Plan, which is pending OWEB's review and approval. The Management Plan, a draft of which is available to reviewers upon request, relies on OWEB's Dry Forest Restoration Model and the Rogue Basin Cohesive Forest Restoration Strategy, as well as other relevant scientific sources, to inform habitat restoration and enhancement of ecological resilience to climate change stressors on the Project Area. The Project Area is in the Siskiyou Crest Conservation Opportunity Area, within the Klamath Mountain Region of southwest Oregon. Altered disturbance regimes – namely, intensive logging and the suppression of frequent, low-intensity fire – compounded with hotter, drier climate conditions have caused widespread ecological degradation across Oregon Conservation Strategy Habitats (Late Successional Mixed Conifer Forests, Ponderosa Pine Woodlands, and Wetlands) and OWEB Ecological Priorities for the Rogue Basin (Deciduous Swamp, Montane Riparian Woodland and Shrubland, and Subalpine or Montane Wet Meadow). These habitats are negatively impacted by the dominance of young white fir trees and unhealthy stand densities that resulted from high-grade logging over the past 70 years. The Project will use silvicultural treatments (felling, scattering, and piling <10" DBH white fir trees with hand crews) and the reintroduction of prescribed burning (pile and broadcast burning) to reduce the white fir understory, restore fire-adapted stand spacing, improve drought resilience, and generally enhance ecological function in the Project Area. This will also result in an increased extent of hardwood-dominated, open-forests, and shrub dominated wetland habitats in the Project Area.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by describing how the proposed actions at the project site will expand habitat connectivity, explaining the costs for treating each acre, describing similar forest health restoration occurring in the area and coordination with those efforts, providing information from the property's draft management plan about existing and future desired plant communities, and explaining the difficulties associated with prescribed burning due to the property's elevation and early snow accumulation.

- The proposed solution section of the application has a clear goal and actions for increasing long-term ecological resilience, restoring mixed severity fire, and enhancing wildlife habitat quality and connectivity across the project property. Site specific treatments and citations for the methodologies that will be used are provided in the application.
- The project is located on Pacific Forest Trust's Mount Ashland Climate Resilience Project, a 2022 land acquisition project that is located in an ODFW Conservation Opportunity Area. The site is also part of the east-west migratory zone on the Siskiyou Crest and near the pending I-5 wildlife crossing just east of the property.
- Actions identified in the property's draft management plan will be implemented to improve forest health conditions and build climate resiliency. The draft management plan incorporates desired species and actions identified in regional strategies, such as The Cascade Siskiyou National Monument Resource Management Plan (2008), Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation in Southwest Oregon (2022), and The Rogue Basin Cohesive Forest Restoration Strategy (2017).
- The draft management plan for the property includes a monitoring strategy that will track progress in restoration outcomes.
- Reconnecting a mosaic of openings in larger tree stands with meadows in between will provide significant ecological uplift.
- The detailed application budget clearly describes project costs.
- The application describes impacts from climate change and how the project design and approach address these impacts.
- The proposed actions are consistent with methods used by the nearby Ashland Forest Resiliency effort and compliments similar restoration by the Lomakatsi Restoration Project, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the United States Forest Service.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project.
- The applicant plans to use the project area for outreach to demonstrate how management can support plant communities more adapted to survive climate change in forested landscape as well as to proactively address local social concerns with prescribed burning.

Concerns

- The application lacks information describing how commercial logging will be managed to support larger tree removal. Clarification provided at the site visit indicated any revenues produced from this activity will be returned to active management of the property for the conservation values.

Concluding Analysis

The project will move the conservation property towards a more climate adapted landscape using

silvicultural treatments and reintroduction of prescribed burning to reduce the white fir understory, restore fire adapted stand spacing, improve drought resilience, and generally enhance ecological function. The project builds on other acquisition projects in the area and on other forest health and climate resiliency restoration actions in the area.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

5 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$270,773

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund Reduced

Staff Recommended Amount

$258,999

Staff Conditions

The award is reduced to meet 10% de minimis policy.

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2012-24030
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Albertson-Gatov Working Landscapes Restoration Project
Applicant: Coos SWCD
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Coos
OWEB Request: $288,103
Total Cost: $1,616,242

Application Description

- Project area(s) consists of two separately owned properties (Albertson and Gatov) which make up a combined 35 acres of tidally influenced wetland pastures located between river miles 9-12 along both banks of the lower Coquille River, in between the towns of Bandon and Coquille, in Coos County, Oregon.
- The Albertson site was historically documented as a forested tidal swamp with shrub understory. Development for agriculture was facilitated by installation of culvert(s) with at least one tide gate in the early 1900s. That culvert and tidegate, undersized by modern standards, has deteriorated to the point of failure. The stream on the property was never channelized but has been severely impacted by grazing and minimal riparian vegetation remains. Water quality is low, and fish access is limited. Proposed work includes levee repairs, replacement, and upgrade of tidegate infrastructure, installation of 2 livestock crossings, 4710ft of fencing, and 5200 native trees/shrubs to restore the riparian habitat along 2723ft of tidal channels, 0.20acres of tidal marsh, and 1930ft of the south bank of the mainstem Coquille.
- The Gatov site was historically managed as a small family dairy. The tidegate drainage system consists of 650ft of buried wooden box culvert, tidegated beneath the ground surface at ~60ft back from the bank of the mainstem Coquille. There is no above-ground stream system or channel network associated with this drainage system, rather it was designed to capture and drain out flood flows and stormwater that would pond at low lying elevations on the interior pasture. Proposed work at this location includes replacement/upgrade of the existing tidegate, removal of the drain tile, creation of 1383ft of new tidal channel habitat, including 0.12acres of tidal wetland marsh; 1410’ of riparian fencing to exclude livestock, and planting 1100 native trees/shrubs along the channel and pond network.
- Partners: Coos SWCD, NRCS, ODFW and the Coquille Indian Tribe.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by clarifying the approach to fencing; the entire main channel section and large wetland area will be fenced off completely and secondary channels will not be fenced. The permitting process is also clarified; permits for each property will be applied for separately. Additionally, no water rights are required for the project because there will be no impoundment. Monitoring information provided in the application provides context for understanding potential water quality benefits expected from the project. Lastly, the mechanism for using Natural Resource Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds to support plant stewardship activities for ten years is clarified; the applicant is working with landowners to arrange to have EQIP payments made directly to Coos Soil and Water Conservation District.

- The project complements other tide gate replacement and tidal wetland habitat restoration projects in the area on similar properties with active agricultural operations.

- The project team has experience working in tidally influenced agricultural areas and has adapted lessons learned from earlier efforts into the project's development.

- Access to 35 acres of tidally influenced habitat will be restored between the two properties, which will address a critical habitat limiting factors for Oregon Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho by creating access to winter rearing opportunities and improving habitat complexity.

- Prioritized actions in watershed plans, including the National Marine Fisheries Service Recovery Plan for Oregon Coast Coho Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit, will be implemented.

- Project designs are at 60% completeness with 100% designs scheduled to be in place by June 2025 along with the completion of project permitting.

- The project will provide opportunity for raising public awareness about managing a working agricultural operation along with the benefits of fencing and planting to improving water quality and wetland stewardship that could lead to future restoration projects. The site is well suited to serve as a demonstration because it is highly visibility from the road.

- The applicant is engaging appropriate partners. Their support is documented in letters included in the application as well as active involvement in funding and technical support. Partners include the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Coquille Indian Tribe.

Concerns

- It is unclear whether the neighboring landowner concerns over tide gate management and flooding are addressed. The water management plans for each property are noted in the application, but details are not provided. The water management plan should describe strategies that will prevent inundation at the upstream property and how ecological benefits will be sustained over the long-term.

- Winter floods will inundate pastures with bacteria and nutrients; water flowing from the pastures to local streams can increase bacteria input. It is unclear how the project design will prevent increased bacteria in the lower Coquille River.
- Dissolved oxygen is not identified as a parameter in effectiveness monitoring plans. Dissolved oxygen is a significant issue in stagnant channels. Replacing tide gates restores a more natural tidal exchange regime that should improve dissolved oxygen levels. Including dissolved oxygen as a monitoring parameter would be helpful to track project outcomes.
- More information describing the expected ecological uplift from the project activities is needed to better understand the cost benefit of the restoration. For example, whether the fencing setback range will be large enough on the stream sections as well as the main channels to promote proper riparian function.

Concluding Analysis

Restoring historic tidal areas is important to the recovery of critical habitats supporting Endangered Species Act- listed coho. The project will restore fish access and habitat along with helping the management of the property for its agricultural uses. Addition information explaining the ecological uplift expected is needed to understand the project cost benefit and priority of the proposed restoration.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

7 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$288,103

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2013-24048
Project Name: Fruitdale Drive Fish Passage Enhancement
Applicant: Josephine County Public Works
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $696,409

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Josephine
Total Cost: $3,482,043

Application Description Many of Oregon's state and county roads have stream crossings which are known impediments to fish passage which, if replaced, would improve fish passage and help maintain healthy streams and fish populations. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) utilized a fish passage screening tool to identify multiple stream crossings on Fruitdale Creek, a tributary of the Rogue River, that block fish passage Southern Oregon/ Northern California coho salmon (threatened), steelhead (winter run) steelhead (summer run), cutthroat trout, and pacific lamprey. These crossings were further identified as transportation safety issues because of culvert degradation including open joints, cracking, and distortion of the structures.

Last year, in collaboration with ODOT, the ODFW secured $9.25M through the federal National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration grant program to replace two impassable culverts with structures that meet federal Aquatic Organism Passage criteria. These two projects (Fruitdale Cr @ Hwy 99, ODOT-owned (42.421718; -123.30734) and Fruitdale Cr @ Fruitdale Dr, Josephine County-owned (42.41868399, -123.30711477) will restore 1.3 miles of habitat connectivity of native migratory fish on Fruitdale Creek. These projects further addresses limiting factors listed in the ODFW Coastal Coho and Fall Chinook Conservation Plans by removing migration barriers that can deliver ecosystem benefits such as restoring natural sedimentation cycles and allowing for more natural passage of large woody debris while improving access to fish habitat for climate resiliency.

If accepted, this grant application would comprise a portion of the non-federal match requirement for the Federal Highways grant for the Fruitdale Dr crossing. These culvert replacements are part of a collaborative effort between ODOT, ODFW, Josephine County, the Federal Highway Administration to benefit aquatic passage and, in particular, species id

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The culvert replacement will improve connectivity to approximately 1.3 miles of habitat for Endangered Species Act-listed Southern Oregon Northern California coho and summer steelhead.

- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife secured $9.25 million through the federal National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration grant program to replace the two lower Fruitdale Creek culverts with structures that meet federal passage criteria. OWEB funds will be used to replace the upstream culvert at Fruitdale Drive.
- The applicant is engaging appropriate partners with partner roles and responsibilities clearly delineated in the application narrative.
- Fish passage restoration in Fruitdale Creek will address fish passage and cold-water availability, two of the primary limiting factors for the recovery of steelhead in the Rogue Basin identified in the Rogue-South Coast Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan.

Concerns

- The application does not describe stream and riparian habitat condition, fish presence, other barriers upstream, and hydrology such as current flow.
- The application lacks design information needed to determine whether the project approach will achieve the proposed restoration goal. For example, it is unclear how the design wwill address the steep stream gradient and improve passage and stream function at both culvert locations.
- No design alternatives analysis is presented in the application for the culvert replacement.
- Information describing current stream habitat conditions is needed to evaluate the expected ecological benefits for the cost of the restoration.
- Due to the significant costs associated with constructing the pedestrian access route, the project has a high cost for the expected ecological uplift.

Concluding Analysis

The project will restore fish passage on Fruitdale Creek, a tributary of the Rogue River situated in a highly urbanized setting. Species blocked by the culvert include Southern Oregon Northern California Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho, summer and winter steelhead, cutthroat trout, and Pacific lamprey. Design and stream hydrology information is needed in the application to evaluate the technical soundness of the approach and the likelihood of project success.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2014-24050

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Lower North Fork Riparian Restoration Phase II: Streambank Stabilization

Applicant: Coquille Watershed Association

Region: Southwest Oregon

County: Coos

OWEB Request: $423,813

Total Cost: $565,901

Application Description The North Fork is a main tributary of the Coquille River in Coos County, Oregon near the town of Myrtle Point. The North Fork Coquille River (NFCR) basin has experienced negative historic land use practices, such as deforesting of riparian vegetation, removing instream large wood, and logs drives that have exacerbated bank erosion and sediment inputs. Combined, these have been detrimental to both native fish habitat and water quality. This project builds upon Phase I (OWEB # 220-2038-17452) and seeks to address bank stabilization issues located 3,000 ft. (0.57 river miles) upstream from the Myrtle Point drinking water intake plant. This project will directly prevent thousands of cubic yards of sediment from entering the stream. Restoration activities will include constructing a large wood habitat matrix, bank slope restoration (3:1), and revegetation. This project will utilize a minimum of 20 large wood pieces with root wads, 30 pieces of additional large wood, 130 boulders for ballast, small wood and debris as additional roughage, and planting 650 native trees and shrubs within the affected area. 95% designs were completed in June 2023 with match through the BLM and the City of Myrtle Point. OWEB funding will be used to support project implementation and an educational component to NFCR landowners within the Coos SWCD's Strategic Implementation Area (SIA). The Lower North Fork Riparian Restoration Phase II: Streambank Stabilization project is part of a holistic, process-based watershed restoration approach in the NFCR that has been supported by a collaborative of several partners to address all priority limiting factors. Partners include the BLM, City of Myrtle Point, ODFW, Coos SWCD, and NFCR landowners

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns regarding design considerations are addressed in the 95% designs completed by River Design Group, which takes into consideration factors contributing to stream bank failure.
- The project location is within an Oregon Department of Agriculture Strategic Implementation Area and can serve as a demonstration site. The project provides opportunity to raise awareness about riparian restoration through 5 planned tours for local land managers.
- Photographs included in the application clearly show the progression of erosion at the site.

- The North Fork Coquille system provides important spawning and rearing habitat for Oregon Coast ESs-listed coho, steelhead, chinook, and Pacific lamprey.
- The project team is experienced in implementing riparian restoration projects.

Concerns

- The project addresses symptoms of watershed disturbance at the project site rather than the causes of streambank instability.
- The ongoing rate of erosion at the site is unclear.
- Hardening the streambank at the project site will likely send the river's energy downstream and create instability in other locations.
- The site erosion could increase again when the Carey Creek culvert on the opposite side of the North Fork Coquille River is eventually replaced with a larger culvert. This will change the flow and river dynamics at the site and could exacerbate the problem.
- It is unclear whether the design solution consider the flow flashiness of the North Fork Coquille River during the winter months.
- The proposed project action is not recommended in referenced conservation plans, which typically recommend against hardening or armoring banks.
- The project may not be ideal as a demonstration by not addressing streambank instability concerns comprehensively from a watershed level perspective.

Concluding Analysis

Embankment failure is prevalent throughout the lower North Fork Coquille River. The causes of streambank failure are complex and likely due to multiple factors influencing the North Fork Coquille River, starting in its headwaters and moving downstream. The streambank failure is negatively impacting a section of riparian area and pasture located within an active restoration project. The site instability reflects similar issues in lower sections of the entire Coquille River system. The design approach will treat the symptoms of watershed degradation instead of the causes and is unlikely to result in significant ecological uplift.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2015-24051

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Dement Creek Cultural Monitoring & Instream LWD Inflation

Applicant: Coquille Watershed Association

Region: Southwest Oregon

County: Coos

OWEB Request: $208,616

Total Cost: $455,884

Application Description Dement Creek is a 9,700-acre tributary to the South Fork Coquille River (SFCR) located near Broadbent, in Coos County. As one of the major tributaries to the SFCR, Dement Creek has been prioritized for restoration because it has reaches with high intrinsic potential for coho and provides spawning and rearing habitat for coho, fall Chinook, winter steelhead, coastal cutthroat trout, and Pacific lamprey.

CoqWA acquired funding from OWEB in 2021 and from a DWPP grant in 2024 for the Dement Whole Watershed Restoration (WWR) project to address sediment loading, high summer water temperatures, and lack of habitat complexity within the Dement sub-basin (OWEB #221-2036-19584 upload and Dement Creek Project video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJD2Xi0zPNY). Together with BLM, ODFW, Coos Curry CREP technician, and private landowners, the project addresses prioritized actions: 1) Construct wood and boulder structures at 17 sites in lower Dement Creek, 2) Install LWD structures at 16 sites in the upper reaches of Dement Creek, 3) Repair fencing, remove blackberry, and plant along 9.5 acres of riparian corridor, and 4) Decrease sediment loading by improving drainage on 4.2 miles of roads in the basin. Objective #2 has been completed and #3 and #4 are currently in implementation. However, due to the rise in inflation between 2021-2024 (roughly 15%) and recommendations resulting from archeological investigations and consultation with CIT Natural Resources, it became apparent that additional support would be needed to complete Objective #1: Construct 17 LWD & boulder structures in lower Dement Crk.

This application is an effort to support the Dement WWR project and acquire additional funds to complete Objective #1. Funds will be used for contracting an on-site archeology monitor, fund material and contracting needs associated with mitigation measures to protect cultural resources, and to cover inflation costs of materials and labor to install LWD & boulder structures.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application clearly illustrates the status of previous restoration and causes for increased project implementation costs due to rising inflation and cultural resources protection measures needed during implementation. Additional cultural resource monitors will be on site during construction. The applicant is also working closely with the Coquille Indian Tribe to address cultural resource concerns and project approaches.
- Dement Creek provides spawning and rearing habitat for Oregon Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho, fall Chinook, winter steelhead, coastal cutthroat trout, and Pacific lamprey.
- Application designs illustrate how the project can be implemented while protecting cultural resources.

- The upper large wood placement is completed and the road system improvements, pasture fencing, and planting is underway with the current OWEB grant.
- Project team is experienced in implementing instream and riparian restoration projects.

Concerns

- The application indicates Dement Creek is not water quality impaired; however, it is listed for temperature year-round.
- The livestock feeding area needs to be hardened and road runoff diverted from the project location to prevent sediment, bacteria, and nutrients from running off into nearby Dement Creek during winter months.

Concluding Analysis

The original OWEB grant provided funds for four main objectives: 1) constructing wood and boulder structures at 17 sites in lower Dement Creek, 2) installing large wood structures at 16 sites in the upper reaches of Dement Creek, 3) repairing fencing, removing blackberry, and planting along 9.5 acres of riparian corridor, and 4) improving drainage on 4.2 miles of roads in the basin. Objective #2 is completed and Objectives #3 and #4 are currently in implementation. Due to inflation and recommendations resulting from archeological investigations, additional financial support is needed to complete Objective #1. The application clearly articulates the need for additional funding to finish the instream restoration.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

8 of 9

Review Team Recommended Amount

$208,616

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2016-23907
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: MID NF and SF Little Butte Cr Fish Passage Project
Applicant: Trout Unlimited Inc
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Jackson
OWEB Request: $160,458
Total Cost: $179,004

Application Description This Project addresses the need for fish passage improvement at two high priority dams listed on the ODFW Statewide Fish Passage Priority List: MID North Fork Little Butte Dam (RM 0.9) on N Fork Little Butte Creek and MID South Fork Little Butte Creek Dam (RM 1.1) on S Fork Little Butte Creek in Jackson County near Lake Creek, Oregon. These two dams divert water to the Joint System Canal that supplies water to Medford Irrigation District (MID) and Rogue River Valley Irrigation District (RRVID) that serve 2,220 patrons. The proposed project will develop fish passage alternatives and designs for these two diversions that will provide fish passage to over 30 miles of habitat, benefiting ESA-listed Coho Salmon, Fall Chinook Salmon, summer and winter Steelhead Trout, Pacific Lamprey, Cutthroat Trout, and smallscale suckers.
Little Butte Creek watershed has been identified as a high priority by many local, state, and federal strategic restoration, water quality improvement, and fish species recovery/management plans. Significant ecological restoration, fish passage barrier removal, irrigation improvement, and flow restoration projects have and are occurring throughout Little Butte Creek. NOAA’s Coho Recovery Plan identifies fish passage barriers and water withdrawals as key limiting factors to all life stages of Coho. Twenty miles of habitat above the dams has been identified as high intrinsic potential and the watershed is a known stronghold for Coho salmon in the Rogue. Upstream passage and low flows are primary limiting factors for summer and winter steelhead and coho in the Upper Rogue Basin according to ODFW’s 2021 Rogue–South Coast Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan.
The proposed project will complement MID and RRVID's current efforts to conserve water and modernize their irrigation system. Partners include MID and RRVID, RRWC, FCA, Rogue Basin Partnership, JSWCD, BLM, Medford Water Commission, Wild Salmon Center, and Middle Rogue Steelheaders.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The resulting restoration actions will address habitat limiting factors in Little Butte Creek by improving fish access to over 28 miles of quality cool water refugia and instream habitat. This will benefit Southern Oregon Northern California Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho, winter steelhead, and Pacific lamprey.

- There is a clear need to develop designs for fish passage at the North Fork Little Butte Creek and South Fork Little Butte Creek diversions.

- The engineering firm is experienced with designing and implementing similar projects in the Little Butte Creek watershed.
- Alternative approaches will be identified and analyzed as part of the technical assistance project.
- Appropriate data and analysis will be used to inform the design and professionally accepted engineering approaches will be used to develop designs for fish passage at two diversions.
- The project partners, including Rogue River Watershed Council, Rogue Basin Partnership, Medford irrigation District, Rogue River Valley irrigation District, and Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District, have the capacity to implement the project and a consistent track record for successfully developing and implementing solutions to fish passage issues.
- Costs are reasonable for the complexity of the project.

Concerns

- Streamflow is a key limiting factor for Southern Oregon Northern California Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho in the Little Butte Creek watershed. The project misses an opportunity to examine potential water conservation options to provide instream flow benefits in conjunction with the larger piping project the irrigation districts are implementing in the ditch system fed by the diversions.
- The applicant submitted three technical assistance applications this cycle related to fish passage and water conservation. More details explaining existing watershed conditions, critical limiting factors in each project area, and restoration priorities is needed to understand how the projects relate to each other.

Concluding Analysis

The North Fork Little Butte Creek and South Fork Little Butte Creek diversions are identified as priority barriers in the Rogue River watershed on the ODFW's Statewide Fish Passage Priority List. Combined, addressing the two impediments will improve access to over 28 miles of cool water refugia and high intrinsic potential habitat. This project enhances the benefits from the significant investment over the last 20 years in riparian and instream habitat restoration and fish passage in the Little Butte Creek watershed.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$160,458

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$160,458

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2017-23909
Project Name: Brophy Ditch Big Butte Creek Flow Restoration Project
Applicant: Trout Unlimited Inc
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $86,714

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Jackson
Total Cost: $164,813

Application Description This proposed flow restoration project will evaluate current conditions and water use of Brophy Ditch on the North Fork Big Butte Creek in Jackson County for opportunities to conserve water instream and provide efficient water delivery through conveyance efficiencies to benefit the irrigators as well as ESA-listed threatened Coho salmon, state-listed Spring Chinook, summer and winter steelhead, Pacific Lamprey, and cutthroat trout. Big Butte Creek is the only tributary of the Rogue River that Spring Chinook use to spawn which makes preserving flows, especially during migration essential. This project will occur in one of the highest-priority watersheds in the Rogue River Basin for flow restoration and address limiting factors specifically identified by multiple plans for recovery of federal and state-listed fish species. This proposal would provide the required match for our secured OWRD Feasibility Study Grant.
Brophy Ditch has high transmission losses and even though the irrigators divert their full water right and are on a rotation, they do not receive their full allotment. The ditch will be surveyed, and the amount of conserved water will be evaluated through a seepage study, water rights assessment, and crop water requirement evaluation. Opportunities to permanently dedicate conserved water from this senior water right instream for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and the public will be identified and quantified. The final report will include summary of opportunities for conserved water, preliminary designs for conveyance efficiency alternatives, and cost estimates. Project partners include the Big Butte District Improvement Company (irrigators), OWRD, Jackson SWCD, BLM, Rogue River WC, Medford Water Commission, Rogue Basin Partnership, Wild Salmon Center, and Middle Rogue Steelheaders.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by including information on how the amount of conserved water will be evaluated through a seepage study, water rights assessment, current water use, and crop water requirement evaluation.

- The proposal clearly describes the project phases from outreach to technical assistance and describes a clear pathway to restoration actions that will benefit Southern Oregon Northern California Endangered Species Act-listed coho, Chinook, steelhead, Pacific lamprey, and cutthroat.

- Alternatives will be identified and analyzed to develop appropriate options for piping and pump systems that create efficiencies in water use and the potential for conserved water.
- The project provides an opportunity to permanently dedicate conserved water instream from the most senior right in this reach of Big Butte Creek.
- The project manager and applicant have capacity to implement the project and a consistent track record with similar projects.
- Appropriate partners are engaged in the proposed project, including the Bureau of Land Management, Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District, the Jackson County Watermaster, Rogue River Watershed Council, Rogue Basin Partnership, and Wild Salmon Center, increasing the likelihood of success for the technical assistance to lead to restoration projects.

Concerns

- The applicant submitted three technical assistance applications this cycle related to fish passage and water conservation. More details explaining existing watershed conditions, critical limiting factors in each project area, and restoration priorities is needed to understand how the projects relate to each other.

Concluding Analysis

The Big Butte Creek watershed is important to Rogue fisheries and is the primary source for the Rogue Valley's drinking water. The water has been over allocated and climate change is negatively impacting summer stream flows, making fish passage more difficult in summer months through the higher gradient stream reaches. Current conditions and water use will be evaluated to identify opportunities to conserve water instream and provide efficient water delivery through conveyance efficiencies. While the overall potential water savings are less significant compared to other project proposals, the 0.7 cubic feet per second water savings could be important in late June to August when the stream flow rates range from 2-4 cubic feet per second.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

6 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$86,714

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2018-23910
Project Name: Butte Creek Mill Fish Passage and Flow Restoration Project
Applicant: Trout Unlimited Inc
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $87,054

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Jackson
Total Cost: $92,079

Application Description This project seeks to improve fish passage and restore instream flow at a high priority dam that will be listed on the 2024 ODFW Statewide Fish Passage Priority List: Butte Creek Mill Dam (RM 6) on Little Butte Creek in Jackson County near Eagle Point. The dam diverts water to the historic 1872 Butte Creek Mill for milling operations. The proposed project will develop fish passage and piping alternatives and designs for this diversion that will provide fish passage to over 40 miles of habitat, benefiting ESA-listed coho salmon, fall chinook salmon, summer and winter steelhead trout, Pacific lamprey, cutthroat trout, and Klamath smallscale suckers. In addition, opportunities to conserve water and dedicate a portion of these senior rights instream will be assessed through ditch efficiency designs (piping) that would add to the instream water right created by TU's 2022 instream transfer.
Little Butte Creek has been identified as a focal area by the Upper Rogue River Strategic Action Plan for SONCC Coho and this project has been identified as a high priority for implementation on the short-term project list. Significant ecological restoration, fish passage barrier removal, irrigation improvement, and flow restoration projects have and are occurring throughout Little Butte Cr. NOAA's Coho Recovery Plan identifies fish passage barriers and water withdrawals as key limiting factors to all life stages of Coho. Over 40 miles of habitat above the dam has been identified as high intrinsic potential and the watershed is a known stronghold for coho salmon in the Rogue. Passage and low flows are primary limiting factors for summer and winter steelhead and coho according to ODFW's 2021 Rogue–S Coast Management Plan. Partners include Butte Creek Mill Foundation, Wild Salmon Center, Rogue Basin Partnership, ODFW Passage and Screen Program, Jackson SWCD, OWRD, BLM, Medford Water Commission, RRWC, and Middle Rogue Steelheaders.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The resulting restoration actions will address habitat limiting factors identified for the Little Butte Creek by improving fish access to quality cool water refugia and quality instream habitat that will benefit Southern Oregon Northern California Endangered Species Act-listed coho, winter steelhead, and Pacific lamprey.

- Appropriate data and analysis will be used to inform the design. Professionally accepted engineering approaches will be used to develop designs for fish passage and screening at Butte Creek Mill Dam and identify opportunities to conserve water.

- Alternatives will be identified and analyzed as part of the technical assistance project.
- The Butte Creek Mill possesses the most senior water right on this stream system. The project provides an opportunity to conserve a significant amount of senior water rights that will add up to 6 cubic feet per second to the instream water right created by Trout Unlimited' s 2022 instream transfer.
- Partners engaged in the project include the Butte Creek Mill Foundation, Wild Salmon Center, Rogue Basin Partnership, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Passage and Screen Program, Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District, Oregon Water Resources Department, Bureau of Land Management, Medford Water Commission, Rogue River Watershed Council, and Middle Rogue Steelheaders. These partners have a demonstrated track record of working together to implement fish passage and instream flow restoration projects.
- The applicant has a consistent track record for successfully developing and implementing solutions resulting in water conservation and addressing fish passage issues.

Concerns

- The bedrock conditions in the project reach constrains potential alternatives and the site will likely require some sort of fish passage structure provision as part of the design alternative. This will focus the solution more on treating symptoms of watershed disturbance over causes. Only full removal of the diversion will support the restoration of natural stream processes. The future restoration project will have limited ecological benefits for the cost.
- The applicant submitted three technical assistance applications this cycle related to fish passage and water conservation. More details explaining existing watershed conditions, critical limiting factors in each project area, and restoration priorities is needed to understand how the projects relate to each other.

Concluding Analysis

Designs will be developed to improve fish passage and provide for conserved water instream at the lowest barrier in the Little Butte Creek watershed. This diversion supports milling operations for a historic 1872 water powered grist mill. The resulting restoration will improve access to over 40 miles of cool water refugia and high intrinsic potential habitat for Southern Oregon Northern California Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho as well as fall chinook salmon, summer and winter steelhead trout, and Pacific lamprey.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$87,054

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2019-23959
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: Middle Creek Basin Assessment and Project Development
Applicant: Coquille Watershed Association
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Coos
OWEB Request: $136,669
Total Cost: $150,835

Application Description The Middle Creek Basin Assessment and Project Development TA will take place in the Middle Creek HUC-6 basin, part of Southwest Oregon's Coquille watershed. This basin provides important freshwater habitat for the ESA-listed Oregon Coast coho salmon (Oncorhynchus kisutch). Human activities have contributed to greater sedimentation, reduced instream habitat complexity and degraded water quality. The Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery - The Coquille Basin (Coquille SAP) has identified Middle Creek as a priority area for restoration due to its high intrinsic potential for coho salmon spawning and rearing. This project will conduct a Middle Creek HUC-6 basin assessment to document current stressors such as altered riparian function, instream habitat complexity, water quality and floodplain connectivity. The work will identify major sediment sources across 80 miles of gravel roads, assess 16 anadromous stream crossings and evaluate 42.8 miles of instream and riparian habitat. In addition, eDNA sampling will be performed to determine the current range of Western Pond Turtles (Actinemys marmorata) and Western Ridged Mussels (Gonidea angulata) within the basin, both considered a species of concern. These assessments will provide the necessary information to prioritize future restoration efforts and ensure that they are data-driven, scientifically sound and effective. Project partners will include the Coquille Watershed Association, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Coquille Indian Tribe and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. These partners will guide the technical aspects of the project and ensure that the findings inform actionable, long-term restoration strategies for the Middle Creek basin.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The draft Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery - The Coquille Basin (2024) has identified Middle Creek as a priority area for restoration due to its high intrinsic potential for spawning and rearing for Oregon Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho.
- Incorporating eDNA monitoring for Western pond turtles and freshwater mussels, which are species of concern, to inform future restoration is a technically sound approach.

- Standard protocols for assessing the road system will be used to identify major sediment sources across 80 miles of gravel roads and assess 16 anadromous stream crossings to identify the highest priority projects for addressing sediment sources to the stream system.
- The applicant has implemented similar assessment activities to prioritize and drive restoration efforts in the basin.
- Project partners include the Coquille Watershed Association, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Coquille Indian Tribe and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. These partners have capacity and the expertise to guide the project and ensure the findings inform actionable, long-term restoration strategies for the Middle Creek basin.

Concerns

- Providing additional watershed context, including the acreage of the sub-basin, would increase the understanding of the scale and scope of the project.
- Coordinating with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to integrating other fish passage issues into the project, such as the fish ladder located in lower Middle Creek, would increase fish habitat connectivity benefits from the project. The assessment of stream and riparian function will be based on a review of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Aquatic Habitat Inventory survey data collected between 1994 and 1998. Parameters from this data, like geomorphic processes that are expected to be stable, will be integrated with ground-truthing data collection to assess more dynamic parameters, like large wood and riparian conditions. Additional information describing why this approach was selected, the protocols, and examples of how this method has been successfully used to accurately identify and prioritize restoration would be helpful for understanding technical soundness of the approach.
- It is unclear why the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is not engaged in the eDNA sampling since they are already collecting samples.

Concluding Analysis

The project will take place in the Middle Creek basin, part of the Coquille watershed. This basin provides important freshwater habitat for the Oregon Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho. A Middle Creek basin-wide assessment will be conducted to document current watershed conditions, such as altered riparian function, instream habitat complexity, water quality, and floodplain connectivity. This information will be used to identify priority restoration that will improve watershed health and resilience in the Middle Creek basin.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$136,669

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund Reduced

Staff Recommended Amount

$130,726

Staff Conditions

The award is reduced to meet 10% de minimis policy.

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2020-23998
Project Name: Bagley Creek Restoration Design
Applicant: Curry SWCD
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $129,472

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Curry
Total Cost: $218,424

Application Description The Bagley Creek project site is located in the Elk River watershed on the southern Oregon coast, approximately 5 miles north of the town of Port Orford. From the mid-19th to the late-20th century, logging, road construction, stream cleaning, channel straightening, etc. dramatically changed fluvial processes and degraded instream habitat in Bagley Creek, and circa 1951, two dams were constructed near the mouth of the stream at the former Western States Plywood Mill, which led to the extirpation of anadromous salmonids and lamprey from the watershed.

When the Elk River Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery was completed in 2017, the Wild Rivers Land Trust (WRLT) began acquiring parcels and long-term leases on lower Bagley Creek; creating a unique opportunity to comprehensively restore the stream corridor from the Elk River confluence upstream to the edge of the river valley. While WRLT was acquiring land, the Curry Watersheds Partnership (CWP) developed a conceptual project design to restore 2,100 feet of stream channel, 8 acres of floodplain wetland, and 11.4 acres of native riparian forest.

With this TA proposal, the Curry Soil and Water Conservation District (a member of the CWP) will hire an archaeologist and an engineering firm, and utilize in-house staff/contractors, to: assess cultural and historic resources at the project site; finalize a construction-ready project design; develop a revegetation plan; design an off-stream livestock water system; prepare project permits; and develop contracting documents for project construction in 2027. The CWP will coordinate this work with WRLT, who is implementing an EPA Brownfield Cleanup project at the former mill site to remediate contaminated soils and sediment from the operation of the mill. Project partners include WRLT, ODFW, the Wild Salmon Center, NOAA Restoration Center, the EPA, ODA, private conservation investors, and adjacent landowners.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application addresses previous review concerns about the former plywood mill property being an Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Site by providing information on the site and process for evaluation and clean up by DEQ. Additionally, more detail is provided to explain the costs that were lump sum figures in the previous budget.

- Bagley Creek and the project components are identified in the Elk River Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery (2017). Elk River is known to be highly productive for wild salmon and flows through a wide low-gradient valley that provides opportunity to restore quality stream conditions for salmon. Historically, the river likely supported a large amount of the habitat types that will be restored.

- The application has clear goals and actions describing a design plan for restoring 2,100 feet of stream corridor for fish passage, rearing habitat, and water quality.

- The project manager has nearly 30 years' experience working in the Elk River watershed and has completed similar stream channel restoration projects.

Concerns

- Bagley Creek is a small 450-acre sub-watershed of Elk River. The application lacks contextual information needed to understand the importance of the project area and the expected ecological uplift in relation to the larger Elk River watershed.

- It is unclear from the application whether the community will be engaged in development of the restoration plans.

Concluding Analysis

Habitat factors limiting Southern Oregon Northern California Endangered Species Act-listed coho will be addressed by improving access to habitats, restoring instream and riparian habitat, and increasing floodplain connectivity. The relatively small size of Bagley Creek may limit the potential ecological impact for the cost.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

5 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$129,472

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2021-24018
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: Applegate River Mile 25 Side Channel Design (Fall 2024)
Applicant: Applegate Partnership, Inc.
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Jackson
OWEB Request: $160,301
Total Cost: $172,641

Application Description The Applegate River Mile 25 Side Channel Design Project is a resubmission of a previous application (224-2037) from spring 2024, which was recommended for funding but fell below the funding line. The major project elements remain the same, with minor adjustments to the budget, including additional costs for cultural surveys and additional project details that address the feedback from the previous application.

This project will result in engineered designs for the restoration of instream and off-channel refugia habitat and a riparian restoration plan along the Applegate River. The site is located in Jackson County, near the unincorporated town of Applegate, Oregon. Like many other rivers in Oregon, the Applegate River has been disconnected from its historic floodplain due to extensive levees and dikes built by farmers in the 1900s, flow regulation by the Applegate Dam, and reduced snow pack/winter high water events. This project will restore and enhance 0.65 miles of off-channel and side-channel habitat through placement of instream large woody debris and enhancement of side-channel and alcove habitat which are two of the Highest Priority Recovery Actions for SONCC Coho salmon.

This project will directly improve off-channel habitat availability, floodplain connectivity, and improve streamside vegetation composition by improving native species recruitment through riparian restoration. Enhanced rearing habitat will support populations of spring and fall Chinook salmon, ESA-listed threatened SONCC Coho salmon, summer and winter steelhead, Pacific lamprey, cutthroat (migratory) trout, and Western Pond Turtle, as well as other species in the Applegate River Watershed. Project Partners include the landowners, Bureau of Land Management, the Southern Oregon Native Fish Society, Trout Unlimited and Oregon Department of Transportation.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The technical assistance will lead to actions identified in several watershed plans, including the Final Recovery Plan for the Southern Oregon/Northern California Evolutionarily Significant Unit of Coho Salmon. The resulting restoration will address two of the highest priority actions identified, including increasing instream structure and re-connecting off-channel habitats.

- Appropriate data and analysis will be used to inform the design, including site surveys, a geomorphic assessment, hydraulic modeling, drawings for dam removal, and fish passage analysis and design.
- The United States Army Corps of Engineers and the local community will be engaged early in the process for project design and permitting.
- The need for technical assistance is clearly described in the application. The project location has a complex set of issues, including a gravel transport system modified by the dam upstream. The application explains the technical assistance process steps and expected products that will be developed using professionally accepted studies and assessment methodologies.
- The applicant has experience in developing side-channels and associated habitats in the Applegate River watershed.

Concerns

- Maintaining the side-channel connection to the mainstem long term will be challenging. The hydrology of the system is impacted by the dam upstream. The new side channel will be located where substrate starts to settle out in the Applegate River, which could cause it to be cut-off and lead to fish stranding. It is unclear from the application what alternatives will be considered to increase the likelihood of the off-channel connection to sustain long term.

Concluding Analysis

The Applegate Dam has altered the normal hydrology of the river; restoring and enhancing 0.65 miles of off-channel and side-channel habitat along the Applegate River will improve the overall stream condition and function. This will create a more resilient ecosystem that benefits native fish and wildlife species by improving availability of off-channel habitat, increasing floodplain connectivity, and improving riparian vegetation composition.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$160,301

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund Reduced

Staff Recommended Amount

$153,331

Staff Conditions

The award is reduced to meet 10% de minimis policy.

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2022-24043
Project Name: Sandy Creek Phase II Engineering & Design
Applicant: Coquille Watershed Association
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $106,587

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Coos
Total Cost: $126,039

Application Description Sandy Creek is a 12,000 acre drainage to the Middle Fork Coquille River (MFCR) near Remote, OR in Coos County. The MFCR has the potential to provide year-round rearing habitat for coho, chinook, steelhead, coastal cutthroat trout, and Pacific lamprey, but lack of spawning and rearing habitat in tributaries such as Sandy Creek continues to be a critical watershed issue.

In 2019, CoqWA performed a watershed assessment of Sandy Creek to determine the top limiting factors affecting water quality and aquatic habitats. From 2022-2023, CoqWA and partners implemented some of the high priority restoration actions in the Sandy Creek Whole Watershed Restoration Project–Phase I, including replacement of two fish passage culverts and installation of more than 50 large wood structures in the Sandy Creek sub-basin. Objective #4 of that project was to continue implementation for Phase II. This solicitation, Sandy Creek Phase II–Culvert Engineering & Design is the first step in the implementation of the Sandy Creek Whole Watershed Restoration (WWR)–Phase II project, the final phase of a holistic effort to restore the Sandy Creek sub-basin together with partners that include BLM, ODFW, and private landowners. Restoration actions for Sandy Creek WWR–Phase II project include riparian enhancement of 4.3 river miles of Sandy Creek and the MFCR, large wood structure installation along 1.1 miles of Sandy Creek, replacement of two culverts currently classified as fish passage barriers, and installation of improved drainage infrastructure at the top seven sediment producing points in the surrounding road network.

Specifically, this solicitation will fund engineering designs for one of the fish passage barrier culverts, provide staff capacity to design riparian/wood placement/sediment abatement plans, and coordinate/provide access for Coquille Tribe Natural Resources staff to complete archeology investigation and review of project areas.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project resulted from an assessment and project prioritization effort for the Sandy Creek watershed. The application describes a clear need for Phase II technical support for fish passage engineering designs and large wood placement plans, and capacity for the Coquille Tribe Natural Resources staff to complete an archeology survey.

- Sandy Creek provides critical habitat for spawning and rearing Oregon Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho.
- Basing the plan for large wood on data from aquatic habitat inventory surveys is a technically sound approach.
- The project team is experienced in translating the watershed assessment into on the ground projects and has assembled a diverse technical team of landowners and agencies.

Concerns

- The application focuses on coho; including information on other species use in Sandy Creek and how they were considered in the design approach could provide additional ecosystem benefits from the project.
- More information on the habitat quality above the culvert site would be helpful to understand the cost benefit of the future restoration.
- Including a map that indicates the location of the nine miles of suitable habitat above the culvert that will be made accessible to fish would be helpful to understand how the mileage was determined as a project outcome.

Concluding Analysis

In 2019, the applicant performed a watershed assessment of Sandy Creek to determine the top limiting factors affecting water quality and aquatic habitats. Based on this, the applicant implemented some of the high priority restoration actions in Phase I. Phase II is beginning with technical design actions to support the next round of priority restoration actions to restore fish passage and improve instream and riparian habitats. Additional information on the stream gradients and habitat conditions above the culvert will provide a better understanding of the anticipated ecological uplift and priority of the proposed technical assistance.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

8 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$106,587

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2023-24044
Project Name: Deer Creek Historical Floodplain Reconnection Project
Applicant: Siskiyou Field Institute
Region: Southwest Oregon
OWEB Request: $27,500

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Josephine
Total Cost: $42,722

Application Description Siskiyou Field Institute (SFI) seeks OWEB support for a technical restoration design of a 140-acre meadow complex along one mile of Deer Creek and two of its tributaries 2.5 miles above the confluence with the Illinois River in Josephine County, Oregon. This meadow complex has significant ecological and cultural value but faces challenges from invasive species, disrupted hydrology, and habitat loss. To begin to restore these landscapes, SFI has conducted baseline surveys covering habitat and species. This project will integrate existing survey data with hydrological and engineering designs that will include detailed models for floodplain restoration, water quality improvement, and erosion control, tailored to the site's needs. Engineering plans will provide specifications for recontouring, drainage, and soil stability, essential for supporting habitat health and resilience. Key deliverables include a final design report with comprehensive technical plans, invasive species control strategies, indigenized restoration practices, and detailed planting schedules for meadow, riparian, and forested zones. Supporting contracting and bidding, the project will develop compliant documents for competitive contractor engagement, specifying labor, materials, and timelines for each phase. A monitoring and adaptive management plan will establish measurable success metrics and sampling protocols, allowing for responsive adjustments based on ecological data. Working with technical design partners from the USFS, BLM, and ODFW, as well as Indigenous restoration partners at the Long Tom Watershed Council as well as Native Womanshare, SFI aims to enhance regional watershed health, biodiversity, and cultural engagement, fostering sustainable stewardship of Southern Oregon's vital ecosystems.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The proposed project provides an opportunity to return a 140-acre pasture to its historic wet meadow complex state.
- The project builds on planning and assessment efforts completed as part of the applicant's management plan update, which is laying the foundation for this project to move forward.
- Alternatives will be identified and analyzed as part of the technical assistance project, which will help the applicant's Board of Directors determine how to move forward with restoring the site.
- A professional engineer will be contracted to implement technical assistance actions.

- Technical partners are engaged in the project through an advisory group that includes the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and indigenous restoration partners at the Long Tom Watershed Council and Native Womanshare.
- Letters are included in the application that indicate support for the project and incorporating indigenous knowledge and practices to restore the site.

Concerns

- The application lacks information needed to understand the site's current conditions, such as photos and more detailed maps that demonstrate site characteristics and features that will be considered in the design alternatives.
- Additional detail on the individual design actions is needed to clarify how the resulting designs will translate into actions that achieve the desired future site conditions.
- It is unclear if the estimated costs are sufficient to accomplish the proposed goal. The use of lump sums in the budget lack detail needed to determine whether costs are reasonable and necessary for the proposed technical assistance actions. For example, it is unclear if there is sufficient funding to support staffing needed to develop contracting and bidding documents, complete the monitoring and adaptive management plan, and estimate final costs for all phases of the proposed restoration actions.

Concluding Analysis

The project property owned and managed by Siskiyou Field Institute provides an important opportunity to restore historic ecosystems at a location that can be used for outreach to other landowners in the area. Technical restoration design of a 140-acre meadow complex along one mile of Deer Creek and two of its tributaries will help return the site to a more natural condition and restore ecological function.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

7 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$27,500

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2024-23921
Project Type: Engagement_v2
Project Name: New Partnerships for "Beavered" Habitat in the Rogue Basin
Applicant: The Beaver Coalition
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Jackson
OWEB Request: $54,175
Total Cost: $58,830

Application Description This project will work to decrease the number of beavers being killed in Rogue Basin, through engaging with the companies, municipalities, irrigation districts, and landowners who routinely trap out these ecosystem engineers. In these conversations, Project Beaver will explore alternatives to trapping and identify the barriers to implementing more beaver coexistence, thus uncovering new beaver-based restoration and coexistence project opportunities. This effort will also establish communication with regional trappers, laying groundwork for a collaborative effort to relocate the beavers that are currently being killing into pre-approved habitat restoration sites on public land. Project Beaver has partnered with the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest in this project.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application provides a clear description of the parties that need to be engaged for a collaborative effort to relocate beavers currently being killed into pre-approved habitat restoration sites on public land.
- The approach is based on lessons learned in understanding why relocation of beavers has not been effective. For example, the applicant has established a temporary relocation site for beaver families to support a smoother transition into the wild.
- A letter of support from the United States Forest Service demonstrates their active involvement and collaboration in the project.
- The project is timely with House Bill 3464 becoming law, which removes the predatory animal designation from beaver in Oregon. This will move beaver management from the Oregon Department of Agriculture to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, where they will be tasked with adopting rules relating to beaver management.

Concerns

- The evidence linking the engagement to eligible restoration is unclear. With limited engagement with the general public proposed, the outcomes of the engagement actions may not result in timely restoration.
- Information describing sites where beaver are likely to be relocated is needed to understand whether they will be placed in priority locations where they can successfully acclimate and restore habitat conditions.
- Including information in the application describing similar relocating efforts used in restoring habitat conditions would be helpful for understanding the likelihood for the project to succeed.
- The application lacks quantified success measures; for example, adding a description of the expected response rate to the mailings that would be sent to 7,500 people.
- The map included in the application for the entire Rogue basin does not provide information needed to understand the project deliverables, such as identifying areas where beavers are likely to be moved from, potential reintroduction sites, priority areas for relocation, and current habitat conditions.

Concluding Analysis

House Bill 3464 encourages landholders to prioritize non-lethal solutions when dealing with beaver-related issues. Engaging landowners proactively in finding non-lethal solutions like relocation can be an effective solution to replace past extermination practices. For the proposed engagement to be successful, there will need to be pre-determined avenues for beaver relocation that are in place and ready to be implemented before the engagement efforts. The applicant is encouraged to leverage their relationship with United States Forest Service to look at available habitats and prioritize locations based on the potential for uplift in response to beaver introduction. Providing detailed information describing how the proposed approach is likely to be more successful compared to previous beaver relocation efforts, potential relocation sites and the habitat attributes of those sites, and why beaver activity is likely to restore or improve habitat conditions is needed to evaluate whether the engagement efforts is likely to succeed.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2025-23966
Project Type: Engagement_v2
Project Name: Rogue Basin Flow Restoration Stakeholder Engagement Project
Applicant: Trout Unlimited Inc
Region: Southwest Oregon
County: Jackson
OWEB Request: $223,796
Total Cost: $243,796

Application Description This project will support flow restoration outreach in the Rogue Basin by engaging stakeholders to increase their knowledge of the need for flow restoration and the opportunities, tools and incentives available to voluntarily reduce or conserve out of stream water use in prioritized reaches of the watershed. Insufficient instream flow is identified as a key limiting factor in the NOAA Fisheries SONCC Coho Salmon recovery plan (2014), which calls for education on water conservation and instream leasing (p 32-27), increasing instream flow through water rights leasing, retirements, and conservation (p 32-29), and eliminating low flow barriers in the summer to facilitate juvenile movement (p 32-29) as needed activities to recover coho salmon. Similar needs are identified in ODFW's 2021 Rogue South Coast Multi-Species Management Plan for spring Chinook and winter steelhead as well as the draft Upper Rogue Coho Strategic Action Plan.
Trout Unlimited proposes to continue to engage landowners in the Rogue Basin by providing outreach to water users and technical expertise in water transactions to local partners. Flow restoration tools legally protect water instream through irrigation efficiency upgrades, leasing and transfer of water, and minimum flow agreements which help assure fish passage and water quality needs are met for particular life stages of fish. TU will partner with ODFW's new SW Oregon Instream Flow Biologist. TU has completed several flow restoration projects over the last 5 years in the Rogue Basin. This project will support TU's dedicated capacity in the Rogue Basin to develop or support flow restoration projects and without it many opportunities would be overlooked or not fully implemented. This project will partner with ODFW, OWRD, Rogue River WC, IVWC, APWC, SOLC, Medford Water Commission, Illinois Valley SWCD, and Jackson SWCD. In addition, it supports work related to irrigation system modernization by the major Rogue Basin Irrigation Districts.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The Rogue River geography is appropriate for the proposed engagement actions. Water quantity is a critical limiting factor in the Rogue River watershed and affects water quality and all native fish, including Southern Oregon Northern California Coast Endangered Species Act-listed coho salmon.

- There is an evident pathway from engagement to implementation of streamflow restoration actions. The application provides a clear description of the parties that will be engaged and strategies to build support for projects that use flow restoration tools to legally protect water instream through irrigation efficiency upgrades, leasing and transfer of water, and minimum flow agreements.
- Trout Unlimited is experienced and qualified to provide technical support in water transactions; and is engaging the appropriate agencies and local partners to deliver the program.
- The project will build on the successful engagement and restoration project development activities started under OWEB grant #222-2036, which includes the development of eight fish passage and flow restoration projects.

Concerns

- The application includes an overview of restoration projects in development as a result of OWEB grant #222-2036 but lacks specific detail on the expected outcomes from those projects. Providing an explanation of the accomplishments from the previous grant, such as expected cubic feet per second of water provided instream, fish passage miles opened, irrigation efficiency approaches, and anticipated conserved water, would be helpful to understand the cost benefit in continuing the proposed engagement.
- Describing lessons learned and how they have shaped the current proposal would provide a better understanding of the likelihood of success expected from the ongoing effort.
- A map with details describing how the six basins and water users are prioritized would be helpful to understand the strategy for contacting people.
- The success measures for actions associated with engaging with the Medford Water Commission and irrigation districts in the Rogue Basin are vague; adding specific quantified measures would be helpful to understand the targeted outcomes.
- The application lacks details explaining why outreach materials will be redesigned, such as describing lessons learned from using these materials to engage water users.

Concluding Analysis

Engaging the water user community in the Rogue Basin to communicate the need for flow restoration and the opportunities, tools, and incentives available to voluntarily reduce or conserve out of stream water use will address over allocation of water that affects water quality and all native fish, including Southern Oregon Northern California ESA-listed coho salmon. As an ongoing project providing local capacity to engage water users in developing water leases or instream transfers, it is important to understand the specific accomplishments to date to better understand the cost benefit of the engagement project. The priority nature of addressing over allocation of water makes this project a high priority for the Rogue River watershed.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 2

Review Team Recommended Amount

$223,796

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 225-2026-24001

Project Type: Engagement_v2

Project Name: Stakeholder engagement for Bandon's drinking water source watersheds

Applicant: OSU Office of Sponsored Research & Award Admin

Region: Southwest Oregon

County: Coos

OWEB Request: $62,839

Total Cost: $66,140

Application Description The City of Bandon on the southern coast sources its drinking water from reservoirs on Ferry and Geiger Creeks to supply water to a population of ~3,500 people. The watershed area that provides water is a patchwork of 86% private ownership outside of City limits. High rates of sedimentation and consumptive water uses in the watersheds are contributing to decreased resiliency of Bandon’s drinking water supply, and decreased resiliency of fish populations in the Coquille River basin. Between partners on this proposal - OSU Extension, Coquille Watershed Association, Coos/Curry NRCS, ODFW, the City of Bandon, Coos SWCD, and Curry SWCD - there has been limited scope engagement with private landowners in the watersheds. The lack of engagement is a barrier to achieving restoration to manage water quality and quantity. The proposed work will focus multiple engagement opportunities on mutual interests and benefits of water conservation and protection to the private landowners, drinking water, and fish and aquatic life. We will host two workshops targeting all landowners in the watershed, to conduct open listening sessions, and provide education on source water hydrology and protection, best management practices for protecting water quality and supply, and opportunities for further technical and financial assistance. Because cranberry farming is the dominant agricultural use in the project area, we will conduct a baseline assessment and engagement with regional cranberry farmers, followed by a focus group to elicit challenges and opportunities to improve water management. We will also host a workshop targeting cranberry farmers in Ferry and Geiger Creek watersheds, to provide education, and technical and financial resources for water management in their agricultural operations. Engagement with all landowners will lead to implementation of practices and projects to conserve and protect water to benefit drinking water and fish and aquatic life in the source watersheds.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application describes clear strategies for engaging landowners to build interest in implementing practices that conserve and protect water, which will benefit drinking water and fish and aquatic life in the source watersheds.

- Appropriate methods will be used to reach the different community areas and follow up communications will be incorporated. The applicant has set reasonable goals for numbers of landowners that will be reached by the project.
- Appropriate communication techniques will be used to raise awareness about testing for chemical contaminants; the results will be used for targeting communication to different user groups more effectively.
- The project leverages existing relationships within the community with cranberry farmers. The project team has successfully used workshops to engage audiences in conversations about drinking water.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project.

Concerns

- Including an explanation of the sediment data and how it was used to identify sources of sediment causing water quality impairment would be helpful in understanding whether messaging will target the appropriate audiences. Also, incorporating target sediment reductions would strengthen the engagement success by directly tying them to the watershed problem identified in the application.
- Including information about the number of cranberry growers in the project area is needed to understand the scale at which the cranberry school water quality management session could lead to meaningful restoration outcomes that meet the scale of the sedimentation problem.
- It is not clear how budget items like gift cards and well testing waivers are necessary for supporting an effective conversation that addresses the target sedimentation problem identified.
- The expected path from the proposed engagement activities to future restoration actions and expected ecological uplift is unclear in the application. Including examples of the potential restoration opportunities, such as culvert replacements, would be helpful to understand potential outcomes.

Concluding Analysis

High rates of sedimentation and consumptive uses in Bandon’s drinking water watersheds are resulting in decreased drinking water supply resiliency, and increased cost and complexity related to drinking water treatment. Sediment-borne contaminants from upstream land uses are also a water quality concern in these watersheds. Sedimentation and low flows can also have detrimental effects to fish and aquatic life. Engaging with residents and the agricultural community to raise awareness and identify opportunities for reducing harmful sediment inputs into the water systems is important to reduce and prevent non-point sediment pollution. This will benefit drinking water quality and quantity, and fish and aquatic life.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 2

Review Team Recommended Amount

$62,839

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

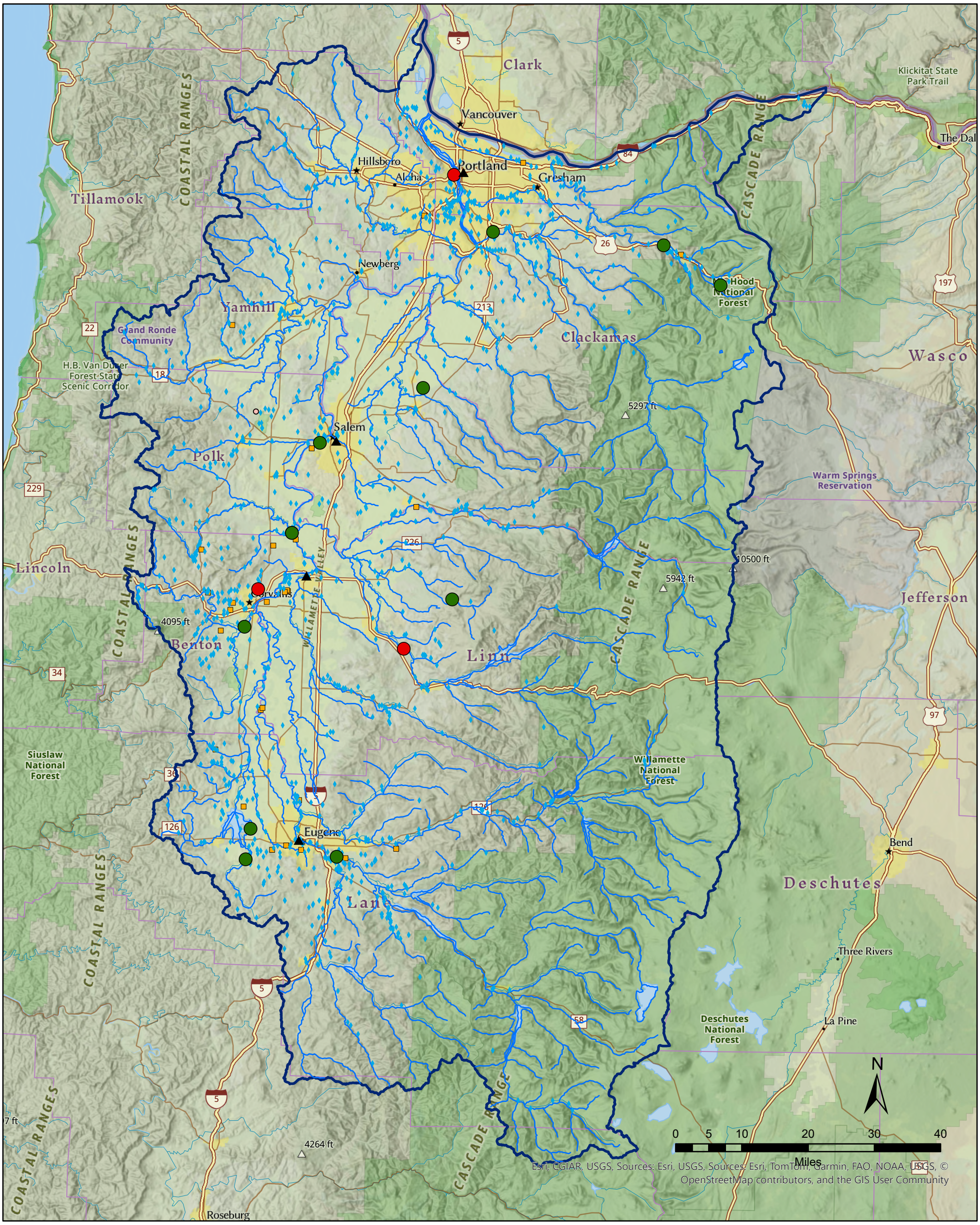
Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Willamette Basin - Region 3 Fall 2024 Funding Recommendations



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Funding Recommendation

- Staff Recommendation For Funding (SRF)
- Below Funding Line (BFL)

Previous Grants 1998 - Spring 2024

- Land Acquisition
- Restoration
- Region 3 Cities
- Region 3 Streams
- OWEB Region 3 Boundary

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

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Region 3 - Willamette Basin Restoration

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-3008	Greenbelt Land Trust	Luckiamute Confluence Floodplain Restoration Phase 1	The goal of this project is to permanently retire all agricultural activities on 89 acres of floodplain habitat and establish a diverse multi-canopy hardwood forest that will enhance water and habitat quality and quantity for fish and wildlife impacted by habitat loss and fragmentation along the Willamette River.	$ 419,445
225-3007	The Freshwater Trust	Upper Sandy River Basin Habitat Restoration Project-Zigzag and Salmon River Watersheds	The overall goal of the proposed project is to increase habitat complexity and diversity and increase side channel/ floodplain hydrologic connectivity in 11.4 miles of stream reaches in Zigzag River, Still Creek, Camp Creek and Cheeney Creek to benefit salmon and steelhead.	$ 464,678
225-3011	Long Tom WC	Coyote Spencer Wetlands Oak and Prairie Habitat Restoration Phase II	1) Expand connected and restored remnant fire-adapted wet prairie, upland prairie, and oak savanna habitats on 55 acres at the confluence of Coyote and Spencer creeks. 2) Establish and expand rare & diverse native plant communities in the meadows of C.S.W. that are resilient to changing climate conditions and prepared for ongoing use of fire. 3) Build upon Phase 1 restoration; maintain and expand partnerships related to ecological burning, native habitats, and rare/culturally important plants.	$ 276,438
225-3001	Institute for Applied Ecology	Restoring floodplain habitat and connectivity at Herbert Farm and Natural Area	This project aims to restore 100 acres of floodplain habitat at the confluence of three waterways in the Marys Creek watershed by installing riparian plantings and woody structures across 2.5 stream miles, planting 21,800 native plants including threatened and endangered species, controlling invasive species across upland and wet prairie habitat, and restoring a fire disturbance regime.	$ 184,993
225-3004	Institute for Applied Ecology	Restoring prairie-oak habitat for state-listed and BLM-sensitive species in the West Eugene Wetlands	The goal of this project is to support the recovery of Bureau-sensitive and state-listed T&E plant species within the West Eugene Wetlands. Specifically, this project aims to improve habitat conditions at five critical sites to introduce or augment populations of Willamette Valley larkspur, shaggy horkelia, thin-leaved peavine, Willamette navarretia, white-topped aster, and Hitchcock's blue-eyed grass, such that they maintain stable or increasing populations through time.	$ 354,984
225-3013	Clackamas River Basin Council	Riverside Park Biocultural Restoration Project - Revegetation	Protect and enhance biodiverse, structurally complex native vegetation and control invasive weeds across 13 acres of riverbank, floodplain, and wetland.	$ 64,967
225-3012	Pudding River WC	Blueprint for the Willamette: Emerald Ash Borer Response Pilot Project in Minto-Brown Island Park	PRWC will pilot a science-based Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) response at Minto Brown Park that will 1) protect critical ecological function and foster climate change resilience; 2) engage the public in EAB education and prevention; 3) craft an EAB response plan to inform riparian/floodplain forest conservation and restoration across the mid-Willamette Valley. We also will protect Tribal/archeological resources, and strengthen key partnerships necessary for a comprehensive, effective EAB response.	$ 115,833
Total Restoration Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 1,881,338**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
225-3005	South Santiam WC	River Creek Rewilding	This project will restore approximately 14 acres of upland forest, wet prairie, and riparian forest along 600 feet of Noble Creek and the South Santiam River by mitigating noxious weeds, installing native plants and thinning an upland forest. The work will culminate in a resilient riparian area and improved upland habitat bordering the South Santiam River and Noble Creek, contributing to stream shading, reduced wildfire risk, and enhancing habitat for ESA listed salmonids and native fishes.	$ 81,018

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT			
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Amount Requested**
225-3002	North Clackamas Urban Watershed Council	Lower Kellogg Creek Vegetation Management: Kellogg Creek Restoration & Community Enhancement Project	$ 440,120
225-3003	Institute for Applied Ecology	Camas Springs Restoration Phase I	$ 113,941
225-3006	Tualatin River WC	Coffee Creek Aquatic Organism Passage Project	$ 222,100
225-3009	Marion County Public Works	North Santiam Watershed Restoration and Revegetation in Marion County Parks	$ 531,227
225-3010	Marys River WC	Recovering System Process in Oak Creek, Phase I	$ 303,795

Region 3 - Willamette Basin Technical Assistance

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-3016	Greenbelt Land Trust	Luckiamute Confluence Cultural Resources Assessment	Conduct a cultural resources assessment of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) to meet Section 106 compliance for the companion OWEB Restoration grant and project proposal 'Luckiamute Confluence Floodplain Restoration Phase 1' and potential grading areas that could result from the RDG hydrologic restoration analysis.	$ 60,098
225-3018	Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA)	Lacomb Irrigation District Fish Screen and Main Canal Improvement Project - Conceptual Design	Develop conceptual designs for improving the first 3.5 miles of Lacomb Irrigation District's Main Canal and fish screen facility in a manner that improves conditions for resident and anadromous fish and their habitat in Crabtree Creek.	$ 99,970
225-3017	The Freshwater Trust	Sandy Basin Climate Change Analysis	The goal of the project is to develop a list of specific restoration actions and locations that are feasible and most likely to be effective at offsetting the anticipated impacts of climate change on the abundance, productivity, capacity, and life history diversity of ESA-listed salmon and steelhead and Pacific lamprey populations in the Sandy River basin.	$ 159,402
225-3014	Pudding River WC	WOH! White Oak Hubs: Oak and Prairie Restoration in the NE Willamette Valley	Lay the foundation for hundreds of acres of oak woodland, savanna, and prairie restoration work on four sites in a region that has up to this point been left out of oak conservation efforts.	$ 51,068
Total Technical Assistance Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 370,538**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order				
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Project Goal (From Application)**	**Amount Requested**
N/A				

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT			
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Amount Requested**
225-3015	South Santiam WC	Bilyeu Creek Beginnings	$ 175,204

Region 3 - Willamette Basin Engagement

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-3021	McKenzie River Trust	Willamette Confluence: Stakeholder Engagement Fall 2024 Application	This project is intended to create a 20-year vision and integrated conservation action plans among community partners vested in the Willamette Confluence, Mt. Pisgah, and the lower reaches of the two forks of the Willamette River. This work will provide a prioritization framework for a broad coalition of land managers to advance shared goals for land stewardship, habitat restoration, conservation education, public engagement, and infrastructure investments in the area.	$ 190,352
Total Engagement Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 190,352**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
225-3022	Oregon Agricultural Trust	Engaging Landowners to Protect Land with Restored Oak Habitat	The goal of engagement is to encourage ag landowners with associated oak habitat to voluntarily engage in conservation programs to protect their land from development and the loss of ag and oak habitat conservation values. OAT can hold ag easements, but will refer landowners to other easement holders in case there is a better fit. We will also refer landowners interested in oak habitat restoration to the right organization, and encourage all landowners to convey cultural access agreements.	$ 93,100
225-3020	Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation	Equitable Regional Transportation Planning	Transportation planners, conservation partners, local communities, jurisdictions, and the general public will engage in a process to increase awareness of the importance of core oak and prairie connectivity areas in the greater Portland metro area and create opportunities for those audiences to take conservation actions within those priority areas and beyond; allowing regional Transportation Project planners to take into account the needs of the communities as they develop their project budgets.	$ 172,158

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
225-3019	Greater Yamhill Watershed Council	Chehalem Mountain Groundwater Stakeholder Engagement	$ 34,505

Region 3 Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$2,442,228**

Region 1 - 6 Grand Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$13,355,571**

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3001-23932
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Restoring floodplain habitat and connectivity at Herbert Farm and Natural Area
Applicant: Institute for Applied Ecology
Region: Willamette Basin
County: Benton
OWEB Request: $184,993
Total Cost: $324,173

Application Description This project aims to restore 100 acres of critical floodplain habitat at the confluence of three waterways in the Marys Creek watershed. A phase one restoration of the site converted the site from agriculture to natural habitat. This second phase will build upon the newly updated 2024 management plan with the aim to increase connectivity between wetland and upland habitats degraded by a long history of vegetation removal, agricultural use, and subsequent channelization.

This project will install riparian plantings and woody structures across 2.5 stream miles, plant 21,800 native plants including threatened and endangered species, control invasive species, and restore a fire disturbance regime. This work will support over a dozen special status plant and wildlife species including the western pond turtle, red legged frog, Kincaid's lupine, and Willamette daisy.

This work will be a collaborative effort and will build upon ongoing work with the City of Corvallis, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Fund (BPA-WWMF), and the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (USFWS).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clearly defined goal and actions for restoring floodplain habitat at the confluence of Marys River, Muddy Creek, and Matt Creek by installing riparian plantings, controlling invasive plant species across upland and wet prairie habitat, and restoring a fire disturbance regime.
- The project builds on previous OWEB restoration investments at Herbert Farm and Natural Area. Phase one restoration to convert the site from agriculture to natural habitat is complete. The proposed actions are part of phase two restoration described in the recently updated management plan and will increase connectivity between wetland and upland habitats that were degraded by vegetation removal and channelization for agricultural use.

- Proposed restoration actions include adding plant diversity by increasing the abundance of threatened and endangered plant species, increasing shade along the stream, and monitoring for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Underplanting will occur in areas with Oregon ash, which will create resiliency against EAB by establishing vegetation that will provide shade if the ash dies off due to EAB infestation.
- The project is located in an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Conservation Opportunity Area and will address actions described in the Benton County Habitat Conservation Plan.
- The project provides opportunity for promoting public awareness about habitat restoration through planting volunteer events.
- Herbert Farm and Natural Area is protected by a conservation easement that will ensure long-term protection and maintenance of investments in habitat restoration.
- Partner support from City of Corvallis and ODFW is demonstrated by letters included in the application and participation in the grant review site visit.
- The applicant has capacity to implement the project and relevant experience with similar restoration. The applicant also implemented phase one restoration on Herbert Farm and Natural Area and wrote the updated management plan.
- The application budget is detailed and has a clear explanation describing how costs were estimated for the proposed restoration actions.

Concerns

- The proposed turtle habitat restoration actions will support only one identified turtle, which may have limited benefit for the cost. These actions, however, are a small portion of the grant request and there is potential that restoring the habitat could attract other turtles.
- The extent to which installing willow stakes on the steeply incised streambank can prevent erosion may be overstated in the application. While the willows may prevent erosion in low to medium flow events, it is likely to have limited effectiveness during high flow events.
- The proposed prescribed fire may not be feasible due to factors outside the applicant's control.

Concluding Analysis

Herbert Farm and Natural Area is a 249-acre site that contains a diversity of priority habitats, including upland prairie, wet prairie, riparian forests, oak woodland, and oak savanna. Currently, 20 special status plant and animal species reside on the property. Continued investment in restoring and protecting these habitats is likely to lead to significant ecological uplift for the cost.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$184,993

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$184,993

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3002-23942

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Lower Kellogg Creek Vegetation Management: Kellogg Creek Restoration & Community Enhancement Project

Applicant: North Clackamas Urban Watershed"s Council

Region: Willamette Basin

County: Clackamas

OWEB Request: $440,120

Total Cost: $637,661

Application Description The removal of Kellogg Dam and restoration of Kellogg Creek to Willamette river backchannel habitat is one of the most critical ecological uplift projects in the Willamette Basin. This proposal will restore vegetation surrounding the Kellogg project site, which will create a vital contiguous buffer zone of contiguous native vegetation in the uplands surrounding the Kellogg Project. We will:

1. Create 31 acres of contiguous habitat when the impoundment is drained and the restored floodplain is revegetated
2. Prevent the future floodplain from becoming infested with invasive species that will otherwise migrate into the area from adjoining upland properties and take over the restored floodplain when it is newly exposed soil and movement of equipment creates disturbance ideal of invasive species incursions, This project will prevent years of expensive and difficult work to remove invasives and restore native vegetation.

If this project is not done in the years before dam removal (2028-29) the project could go the way of Rinearson Dam removal in 2017, where failure to manage invasives before removal created an infestation that covered the site for multiple years. This turned many local stakeholders against the project and required great expense to remove.

We will undertake a 16-acre aggressive invasive species removal and native plant restoration in the uplands that surround the current impoundment. This will create contiguous habitat of native plant communities surrounding lower Kellogg Creek that, when dam removal and floodplain restoration is complete, provide stream to upland habitat connectivity and ensure the Kellogg Creek Restoration & Community Enhancement Project delivers on its ecological uplift.

Project Partners are the City of Milwaukie, North Clackamas Parks & Recreation District, Friends of Trees, Oregon Department of Transportation, American Rivers, Mosaic Ecology, and multiple private landowners and other public and private entities.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clearly defined goal and actions for establishing a 16-acre Vegetation Management Area surrounding the Kellogg Creek floodplain to prevent future spread of invasive plant species that could occur after the Kellogg dam is removed and exposes soil previously submerged by impounded water.

- Some of the previous evaluation concerns were addressed by explaining the need for and sequencing of establishing the Vegetation Management Area before the dam removal project. The proposed planting is a component of the Kellogg Creek dam removal scheduled for 2027-2028. The applicant is using lessons learned from the Rinearson Creek dam removal project where invasive plant species moved into areas left with bare soil and required significant investment to manage. As a result, public support for that restoration project was lost. The proposed project is designed to manage invasive plant species before the water level drops after dam removal and prevent a similar weed invasion that occurred at Rinearson Creek. The application also describes construction staging plans and locations for the dam removal project that demonstrate the proposed plantings will not be impacted by construction.
- Once the Kellogg dam is removed, the Willamette River will be able to backwater up into the tributary, offering a unique opportunity for restoring lower Willamette River stream habitat. Kellogg Creek has potential to provide cold-water refuge for Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed salmon and steelhead that will benefit populations using the Willamette River system from Cottage Grove down through the Clackamas River as they migrate and complete their different life history stages.
- The proposed restoration is likely to address the water temperature TMDL by increasing shade from vegetation and protecting existing shade plants.
- The visibility of the restoration site locations provide opportunity for promoting public awareness about watershed restoration that could lead to future project opportunities.
- The applicant has effectively engaged the community, including underserved communities, and an interagency team in project development.
- A diversity of partners support the project, which is demonstrated by letters included in the application from landowners, City of Milwaukie, and North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project.
- A qualified contractor that has implemented similar projects is selected to complete revegetation actions.

Concerns

- Some concerns from the previous project evaluation are not addressed. While the sequencing and construction staging for the Kellogg dam removal is clarified in the application, the sequencing of revegetation actions with future Kellogg Creek channel and floodplain restoration is still unclear. The applicant previously received a Technical Assistance grant to develop a conceptual design for restoring the channel and floodplain for Kellogg Creek after the dam is removed. While a map was included in the application that is a product from this previous planning effort, additional information describing how the proposed revegetation and weed control will be integrated with future restoration would be helpful for understanding the long-term strategy for Kellogg Creek. For example, the conceptual map indicates future restoration could include large wood to increase channel and floodplain habitat complexity where feasible; however, it is unclear what construction access plans are in place to ensure the proposed revegetation actions are not impacted by future large wood placement. Planting in areas adjacent to the floodplain could be problematic for accessing sites for future channel or floodplain restoration.

- The project cost for 16 acres is considerably higher compared to similar weed control and planting projects. Plant materials listed in the budget appear to include double the number of plants that will be installed as described in the planting prescription narrative.

- It is unclear whether there are potentially upstream weed sources that could impact the project area and if there are plans to engage upstream landowners to help manage these sources.

- No lower cost alternatives were considered for stabilizing the site to prevent the spread of weeds, such as waiting on installing plants and focusing on only weed control or seeding grass as a cover until after floodplain and channel restoration is completed.

Concluding Analysis

Significant planning is underway to remove the Kellogg dam and restore the stream channel and floodplain, which will provide significant ecological benefits in the Lower Willamette River. The spread of noxious weeds after dam removal can create a costly consequence and there is merit for mitigating weeds to limit these impacts. Restoring the vegetative community adjacent to the Kellogg Creek floodplain now, however, could create logistic challenges for future floodplain and channel restoration. Without additional information describing how the various floodplain and channel restoration components planned for Kellogg Creek are coordinated and sequenced, it is unclear why restoring the Vegetation Management Area should be completed now at the high cost when these areas could be impacted by future restoration efforts.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3003-23970
Project Name: Camas Springs Restoration Phase I
Applicant: Institute for Applied Ecology
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $113,941

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Linn
Total Cost: $173,455

Application Description Camas Springs is a 38-acre property near Crawfordsville on the Calapooia River. It contains a mosaic of connected habitats, including a high-quality camas meadow, mineral spring, ash/pine riparian community, oak woodland, and incense cedar forest. The property is part of an Oregon Conservation Strategy (OCS) designated wildlife corridor and hosts a breeding population of band-tailed pigeons.

The diverse ecosystems at Camas Springs and its location adjacent to managed forests, agriculture, and development, make it a valuable refuge for wildlife. However, it is threatened by nonnative species, climate change, and loss of disturbance dynamics leading to ecosystem type conversion. Undertaking restoration will connect habitats, provide opportunity for dynamic interactions, and enhance the integrity of remnant plant communities.

This project will add native plant diversity and food sources for wildlife, protect a four-acre camas meadow, expand wet meadow area, and create an open, native understory in the oak woodland and riparian corridor. Work will include herbicide applications, hand weeding, and occultation to control invasive species; planting and seeding native forbs, grasses, and shrubs; and installing instream water-slowing structures. This work is expected to be the first phase of a longer-term project to create resilient, high-quality habitat for many species.

The landowners live on the property and are highly committed to restoration and preservation of its habitat quality. In addition to providing labor hours, they are pursuing enrollment in the USFWS Partners Program, and placement of a conservation easement on the property. They initiated invasive management through an NRCS EQIP grant, which will be completed within the year. Institute for Applied Ecology developed plans to build on those efforts and will lead restoration work. The Calapooia Watershed Council is involved as a partner to assist with instream components of the project.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The proposed restoration actions will benefit camas meadow, oak woodland, conifer forest, and riparian habitats on a 38-acre property in the Calapooia Watershed.

- The property includes a mineral spring and several seasonal streams that flow into the Calapooia River. The mineral spring supports one of the largest populations of band-tailed pigeons in the Willamette that has been monitored by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) since the 1960s.
- The proposed restoration actions are based on a forest management plan for the property that was written by a qualified contractor.
- The project builds on previous restoration completed by the landowner, some of which was in partnership with Natural Resource Conservation Service.
- The project site is located in an ODFW Conservation Opportunity Area and priority wildlife connectivity area.
- Landowner support is demonstrated by active involvement in planning and implementing the project. The landowner is also open to working with Tribal partners to make the camas meadow accessible to Tribal members to harvest bulbs and seed.
- The applicant has capacity to implement the project and relevant experience with similar restoration.
- Qualified contractors that have implemented similar projects are identified to complete weed control and revegetation actions.
- Costs are reasonable for the proposed actions.

Concerns

- Conceptual plans included in the application indicate Post-Assisted Log Structures (PALS), Beaver Dam Analogs (BDAs), and channel-spanning logs will be utilized on the site to slow water, re-meander stream channels, and provide filtration. The application narrative does not describe how all these low-tech instream structures listed in the designs will be installed. For example, it is unclear if PALS will be used because only BDAs are referenced in the application. BDAs can be effective in restoring stream conditions but typically require long-term maintenance.
- The goal for the proposed wood structure is to disperse water from the stream to keep the meadow wet. BDAs may not be a technically sound design method for achieving this goal because they are typically used to back up water in a stream channel. Clarification provided at the site visit indicated that designs for the wood structures is conceptual and further consideration is needed to ensure designs can meet the wet meadow restoration goals. If this results in changes to the design, it could impact costs and application budget estimates may no longer be sufficient.
- Solarization to treat pasture grass in the camas meadow could have limited efficacy for the cost, will likely take a longer timeframe to control grass, and will introduce micro-plastics in replacement of chemical herbicides. Solarization may not be an effective alternative to avoid herbicide use.

- Capacity and investment for long-term stewardship and maintenance of the restoration investment is unclear.
- There may be missed restoration opportunities, such as adding a large woody component to the wet meadow that would provide habitat benefit for amphibians or addressing overstory encroachment.
- A future housing development proposed for an adjacent property could interrupt habitat connectivity and this fragmentation may limit the ecological benefits from this project.

Concluding Analysis

Camas Springs provides an opportunity to continue restoration on a mosaic of camas meadow, oak woodland, conifer forest, and riparian habitats. Project elements, such as the BDAs, are not yet fully planned. As a result, it is difficult to determine whether some design elements are appropriate for the site, are likely to be effective in achieving restoration goals, and whether the cost estimates are sufficient to implement the actions.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3004-23972

Project Name: Restoring prairie-oak habitat for state-listed and BLM-sensitive species in the West Eugene Wetlands

Applicant: Institute for Applied Ecology

Region: Willamette Basin

OWEB Request: $354,984

Project Type: Restoration_v2

County: Lane

Total Cost: $468,366

Application Description In 2023, the Oregon Department of Agriculture added 13 species to the state's list of threatened and endangered plants. Among these species, three are present on Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-administered lands in the West Eugene Wetlands (WEW), located in Lane County, Oregon. Additionally, two species that are candidates for future listing are also present, as are four other species listed prior to 2023. Unfortunately, most of the newly state-listed and candidate species occur on BLM lands designated as Natural Maintenance Areas (NMA), which receive less attention and funding compared to lands designated as Prairie Restoration Areas, which tend to host more federally listed species. As a result, NMAs face significantly higher invasive species pressure, and rare plants are at risk of local extirpation.

For this project, we propose to work at five NMA sites in the WEW across 124 acres to restore habitat and augment or introduce state-listed and candidate species, including Willamette Valley larkspur (Delphinium oreganum), shaggy Horkelia (Horkelia congesta ssp. congesta), thin-leaved peavine (Lathyrus holochlorus), Willamette navarretia (Navarretia willamettensis), white-topped aster (Sericocarpus rigidus), and Hitchcock's blue-eyed grass (Sisyrinchium hitchcockii). Target species occupy a diverse set of habitats such as upland and wet prairies, vernal pools, ash swales, and oak woodlands. Restoration of these habitats will increase biodiversity and benefit wildlife, improve connectivity between habitat patches, complement adjacent ongoing restoration efforts, and promote climate resiliency. Project success will be achieved through integrated pest management techniques and strategic native revegetation. A network of partners will contribute to and benefit from this project including the BLM, Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, City of Eugene, Long Tom Watershed Council, NRCS Plant Materials Center, and the Institute for Applied Ecology.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clearly defined project goal and site-specific actions to restore prairie-oak habitat in the West Eugene Wetlands.
- Previous project evaluation concerns were addressed by adding information explaining how each treatment site was selected as a priority for restoration and providing details describing specific actions planned for each site.

- Adding threatened and endangered plant species to the selected site locations will support implementation of goals and tasks in the Prairie Species of Western Oregon and Southwestern Washington Recovery Plan by restoring matrix prairie species and increasing their abundance through population augmentation.

- State-listed plant species, including Willamette Valley larkspur, Hitchcock's blue-eyed grass, and thin-leaved peavine, will be locally produced at the Institute for Applied Ecology farm, the Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) Plant Materials Center in Corvallis, or through contracts with local farmers.

- The proposed project fits within the context of past and planned future restoration by increasing connectivity with other habitat investments in the area, including prairie and oak habitat restoration completed by the Long Tom Watershed Council.

- The applicant is engaging appropriate partners to implement the project, including Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, City of Eugene, Long Tom Watershed Council, and NRCS Plant Materials Center.

- Volunteer planting events will promote public awareness about restoring prairie habitat while also extending applicant capacity to implement the restoration.

- The applicant has experience developing prairie species plant materials and implementing prairie restoration in the Willamette Valley.

- The application budget is detailed and has a clear explanation describing how costs were estimated for the proposed restoration actions. The overall project cost is reasonable for the proposed six-year period to maintain threatened and endangered species planted, which will increase the likelihood of success in establishing these populations.

Concerns

- The BLM's West Eugene Wetlands Management Plan categorizes land as either Natural Maintenance Areas (NMA) or Prairie Restoration Areas (PRA). Much of the proposed restoration area lies within NMAs because most of the state-listed and candidate plant species occur on these lands. NMAs receive less attention and funding compared to lands designated as PRA. In project areas designated NMA, it is unclear whether BLM will have capacity to steward and maintain restored plant communities beyond the six-year project period. Since the project area is surrounded by increasing pressure from development and associated sources of encroaching invasive species, long-term maintenance will be needed to protect restoration investment.

Concluding Analysis

Augmenting native plant populations of species listed as threatened or endangered can be effective in achieving recovery goals. The proposed restoration will also complement other nearby restoration projects and expand connectivity of prairie and oak habitats. The project is likely to provide a significant

habitat benefit for the cost due to the combination of expanding habitat connectivity and promoting listed prairie plant species populations.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

5 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$354,984

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$354,984

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3005-23980
Project Name: River Creek Rewilding
Applicant: South Santiam WC
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $81,018

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Linn
Total Cost: $120,223

Application Description Historical land use practices in the Willamette Valley have contributed to compromised ecological function that impacts aquatic and terrestrial species alike. Recovery plans for the mid-Willamette basin indicate that (1) reduced access to habitat and (2) impaired habitat quality are two primary limiting factors for federally listed and managed fish species in the basin. The actions proposed by the South Santiam Watershed Council (SSWC) in partnership with two private landowners are intended to improve water quality, water quantity, riparian and upland habitats for the benefit of fish and wildlife, including federally listed spring Chinook and winter steelhead; rainbow trout, coastal cutthroat trout, and myriad amphibian and terrestrial species. This project seeks to restore approximately 14 acres of wooded upland; meadow and wet prairie; and riparian and floodplain forest along 600 feet of Noble Creek and 600 feet of the South Santiam River by removing invasive plants; thinning existing conifer stands; planting native trees and shrubs; and providing plant establishment activities until the native plantings are free to grow. The proposed work will result in a resilient riparian forest and improved upland habitat bordering the South Santiam River and Noble Creek, enhancing habitat for Upper Willamette River Spring Chinook, Upper Willamette River Steelhead, coastal cutthroat, and resident rainbow trout and protecting core cold water habitat on Noble Creek.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clearly defined goal and actions for restoring 14 acres of upland forest, wet prairie, and riparian forest along 600 feet of Noble Creek and the South Santiam River.
- The project is ready for implementation.
- The project incorporates treatments that can improve habitat conditions, including creating contiguous habitat in riparian areas, removing invasive plants to allow native species to establish, thinning upland areas to improve forest health, and restoring wet meadow.
- The application clearly describes the watershed limiting factors impacting the project site, including presence of invasive plant species and habitat simplification, that will be addressed through the proposed actions.

- The project site is located in an area listed in the TMDL as a core cold water habitat. Oregon Department of Agriculture is encouraging landowner engagement that results in projects that reduce stream temperatures in this same area.
- The project has potential for serving as a demonstration site to promote awareness about watershed restoration that could lead to future project opportunities. Recruiting neighboring landowners to continue restoration strategies could significantly increase the ecological benefit gained from the proposed investment.
- Landowner support is demonstrated by letters included in the application, active participation in the project planning process, and flexibility in integrating habitat restoration into land management.
- The applicant has capacity to implement the project.
- Overall project cost is reasonable for the proposed restoration actions.

Concerns

- Additional detail in the application budget would be helpful for evaluating whether costs are reasonable and sufficient to implement the proposed restoration. For example, it is unclear whether the line item under contracted services for planting 14 acres includes the cost of plant materials. The work plan indicates the applicant will secure plants instead of the contractor; however, there are no plants listed under materials and supplies. Project expenses and the roles of staff and the contractor are unclear between the work plan and budget.
- The proposed restoration actions to increase shade will likely have limited impact to water temperature. The aerial map included in the application indicates Noble Creek and the South Santiam River already have full or close to full canopy at the project site that is providing sufficient shade.
- Including water temperature data in the application would be helpful to understanding whether the stream is currently providing core cold-water habitat that meets the 16-degree Celsius standard and, therefore, is a priority for investing in establishing additional shade to protect long term resilience.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project has potential for leading to future habitat restoration in the South Santiam Watershed that could collectively provide water quality and habitat benefits. While the proposed actions are technically sound, the project scale limits the potential ecological uplift from the investment by creating an isolated micro-habitat that lacks connectivity to additional intact habitats. Pursuing an engagement grant to recruit additional landowners could increase the scale of the restoration opportunity and create potential for higher priority ecological uplift.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

8 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$81,018

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3006-23994
Project Name: Coffee Creek Aquatic Organism Passage Project
Applicant: Tualatin River WC
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $222,100
Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Washington
Total Cost: $277,625

Application Description The Coffee Creek Aquatic Organism Passage Project (Project) is located on Coffee Creek, a 4th-order tributary of Gales Creek in the Tualatin River basin, Washington County, approximately 13 miles northwest of Forest Grove and north of Highway 6.

An aquatic passage barrier was identified on Coffee Creek at its intersection with Agaard Road during Rapid Bio-Assessment (RBA) surveys in 2014. The barrier is listed as a high priority for removal in the Tualatin River Watershed Council's (TRWC) 2015 Gales Creek Action Plan (GCAP). Gales Creek is temperature-limited for anadromous summer rearing habitat. Steelhead Intrinsic Potential (IP) modeling for the Tualatin basin identified Coffee Creek as a priority anchor habitat location for steelhead trout due to the important habitat conditions present above the barrier. The Project aims to replace a double-barrel culvert with a cast-in-place modular abutment bridge, opening 4.1 miles of habitat to anadromous and fluvial salmonids and giving access to spawning grounds, winter refugia, summer rearing areas, and thermal refuge from the temperature-limited mainstem of Gales Creek. A 16-acre forested wetland exists above the barrier, containing a braided stream network with spawning gravels. This stream reach is currently inaccessible to Pacific Lamprey and juvenile salmonids due to the passage barrier. Removing it will provide access to one of the few remaining legacy cold-water sources in the 6th-field HUC headwaters. The steep channel gradient at the culvert site will be reduced to 2% with a roughened rock channel to meet Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife fish passage guidelines. Erosion threatening the road prism of Agaard Road will also be addressed. The project will also address a lack of riparian vegetation within the reach. Project partners include private landowners, the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District (TSWCD), Clean Water Services (CWS), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and TRWC.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clearly defined goal for removing a fish passage barrier that will allow fish passage to four miles of stream habitat.
- The fish passage barrier is listed as a high priority for removal in the watershed council's Gales Creek Action Plan and Coffee Creek was identified by the NetMap tool as having high-quality habitat essential for steelhead.

- Restoring fluvial processes at the stream crossing will improve watershed function while providing passage to thermal refuge for steelhead, lamprey, coho, and cutthroat.
- The proposed project fits within the context of past restoration completed by the applicant that is increasing aquatic habitat connectivity in the watershed.
- Alternatives for each restoration action were identified and evaluated.
- Pre- and post- restoration eDNA monitoring will be completed for multiple aquatic species that will provide information about changes in species diversity and distribution.
- Greenhouse gas emissions were considered by selecting a design solution and location that will require less excavation.
- The project team has capacity and relevant experience for implementing the project.

Concerns

- The application budget has only one line item lump sum in direct costs that provides no details for understanding project costs. The budget lacks information needed to determine whether costs are reasonable, necessary, and sufficient for achieving the proposed restoration actions.
- The project design does not meet National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) fish passage design criteria, which may limit the efficacy of fish passage for the cost. For example, the proposed boulders and riffles are unlikely to match the natural geomorphology and may over-coarsen the stream. The resulting riffles could create a water velocity barrier affecting fish passage and may not provide adequate resting locations for fish.
- It is unclear if the applicant has landowner approval beyond verbal consent. The project is located on a private road and landowner support is uncertain without letters included in the application.
- There are no expenses in the budget as a direct OWEB cost or match for project management. It is unclear how project management listed in the work plan and needed to implement the project will be funded.
- Including water temperature data in the application would be helpful to understanding whether the stream is currently providing cold-water refuge habitat that meets the 16-degree Celsius standard.

Concluding Analysis

Replacing the fish passage barrier on Coffee Creek to provide access for aquatic species to four miles of stream habitat has potential to provide significant ecological benefits. It is difficult to determine the likelihood the project will succeed due to the lack of details in the application needed to understand the project budget, why the final design does not meet NOAA criteria, and landowner commitment.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3007-23996

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Upper Sandy River Basin Habitat Restoration Project-Zigzag and Salmon River Watersheds

Applicant: The Freshwater Trust

Region: Willamette Basin

County: Clackamas

OWEB Request: $464,678

Total Cost: $4,386,347

Application Description The Freshwater Trust (TFT) and US Forest Service (USFS) are taking the lead on the Upper Sandy River Basin Habitat Restoration Project-Zigzag and Salmon River watersheds on behalf of the Sandy River Basin Partners (the Partners). The Sandy River originates on Mt. Hood and flows 56 miles northwest before entering the Columbia River near Portland, Oregon. The proposed project will address primary limiting factors by increasing large wood abundance on the Zigzag River as well as three priority tributaries in the Zigzag River and Salmon River watersheds: Camp Creek, Still Creek, and Cheeney Creek. The proposed work is on public land managed by the USFS located near Zigzag, Oregon in Clackamas County.

Sandy River salmon and steelhead populations have declined over the last century due to degradation of habitat and other factors. The Partners have identified the Zigzag and Salmon River watersheds among the top areas providing high quality habitat for the basin's native fish. The Partners are aligned on a near term goal of restoring these priority watersheds to advance Sandy basin-scale restoration.

The restoration action to be undertaken as part of the proposed project includes placing large wood via heavy lift helicopter to construct large wood jams. The design intent of this action is to increase habitat complexity and diversity and increase side channel/ floodplain hydrologic connectivity to benefit salmon and steelhead. This project is part of a larger, multi-year, watershed-scale restoration effort and builds on similar successful projects completed in the basin by TFT and the Partners since 2008.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clearly defined goal and actions for increasing habitat complexity and side channel connectivity with the floodplain across 11.4 stream miles in Zigzag River, Still Creek, Camp Creek, and Cheeney Creek to benefit salmon and steelhead.
- The proposed project is part of a large-scale strategy that builds on momentum from and leverages OWEB investments in previously successful restoration that includes over 30 miles of improved stream habitat in the Upper Sandy Basin.
- The project is ready for implementation with designs and most of the match secured.

- The proposed restoration actions will address watershed limiting factors to Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed fish recovery by restoring large wood abundance and increasing off-channel habitat for Chinook, coho, and steelhead spawning and juvenile rearing.
- The Lower Columbia River Conservation and Recovery Plan for Oregon Populations of Salmon and Steelhead identifies the Sandy River basin as a high restoration priority; the upper Sandy subwatershed where Zigzag River, Still Creek, Camp Creek, and Cheeney Creek are located is identified as a priority area within the basin.
- The methods are appropriate for addressing causes of watershed disturbance by restoring natural processes at the reach-scale by increasing off-channel habitat, floodplain connectivity, and large wood abundance, which will restore habitat elements most limiting to ESA-listed fish. Adding instream structures and reactivating the floodplain connection with the streams will also slow water flow and allow for additional hyporheic exchange that will cool water temperatures important for building resilience to changing climate conditions.
- The map included in the application depicting planned and completed projects provides a comprehensive overview of the long-term Upper Sandy Basin restoration strategy implementation.
- The application includes highlights from effectiveness monitoring completed from previous restoration that indicate the strategy is effective in restoring high quality, self-sustaining habitat. Spring chinook habitat usage has increased by 450% in previously restored areas.
- The project team has a consistent track record for implementing similar high-quality projects in the Upper Sandy Basin since 2008. The team has relevant experience for designing the restoration treatments.
- Large wood material will be sourced locally through salvage from the Riverside Fire, which will reduce project costs.
- Project costs were estimated from similar restoration projects in the Sandy and overall project costs are reasonable for the proposed actions.
- Partner support is demonstrated by match.

Concerns

- Adding information describing site-specific details for the current project phase would strengthen the application, including explaining how each treatment site was selected as a priority for restoration, how actions at sites are informed by lessons learned at previous projects, and methods for the specific sites, such as providing estimated large wood target numbers.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project builds on a phased stream restoration strategy that has been implemented since 2008 and has a record of producing quantified fish response to habitat improvements. The Sandy River

watershed provides habitat to numerous ESA-listed fish species, making it a priority area for instream habitat restoration.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$464,678

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$464,678

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3008-24009
Project Name: Luckiamute Confluence Floodplain Restoration Phase 1
Applicant: Greenbelt Land Trust
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $419,445

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Polk
Total Cost: $606,756

Application Description Greenbelt Land Trust recently acquired the Luckiamute Confluence property, which is located on Willamette River mile 110.5, just five miles north of Albany. This conservation property has been on the “wish list” for decades and its protection and restoration marks an incredible boon to the expanding network of protected lands needed to achieve the regional recovery goals for salmonids. This 106-acre parcel fills a vital gap between two sections of the Luckiamute Landing State Natural Area (LSNA), creating a continuous stretch of over 1,000 acres of protected floodplain habitat. With nearly half a mile of Willamette River frontage and its proximity to the confluence of the Luckiamute and Santiam rivers, it’s one of the most important sites for fish and wildlife in the mid-Willamette region. The Willamette Planning Atlas identifies it as the single greatest area of floodplain forest of any individual 1-km ‘slice’ of the Willamette River!

This property has been in active farmland production since 1936 with only a thin band of riparian forest remaining along its edges. This project will permanently retire all agricultural activities and create 89 acres of prime floodplain forest habitat. This is a fantastic opportunity to address limiting factors for salmonids such as impaired water quality and access to off-channel habitat. We aim to first meet Section 106 compliance requirements, proposed in the companion OWEB Technical Assistance grant ‘Luckiamute Confluence Cultural Resource Assessment’ before establishing a diverse, multi-canopy hardwood forest by implementing site-prep, planting trees and shrubs, and conducting plant stewardship for 3 years. This project will restore natural processes, provide lasting impacts for the benefit of fish and wildlife populations, and promote climate resilience in the area. Earthwork will be completed in a subsequent phase.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clearly defined goal and actions for retiring agricultural activities on 89 acres of floodplain habitat to establish a diverse multi-canopy hardwood forest that will enhance water and habitat quality and quantity for fish and wildlife impacted by habitat loss and fragmentation along the Willamette River.

- The project builds on a previous OWEB Technical Assistance investment.

- The project site is nestled between two tracts of the Luckiamute Landing State Natural Area (LSNA). The LSNA was ranked by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) as the seventh most important area to prioritize restoration across its 255-property ownership. The Luckiamute Confluence property is the missing link, offering a rare chance to restore more than 1,000 acres of continuous floodplain forest and greatly enhance river-floodplain interactions.
- The project builds on significant watershed investments at LSNA that occurred for over a decade by OWEB, Meyer Memorial Trust, and Bonneville Power Administration, and are showing significant outcomes from restoring floodplain forests.
- The project lies within an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Opportunity Area and restoration actions will benefit priority fish, amphibian, and bird strategy species.
- The proposed planting approach is technically sound; the applicant has successfully used it at other locations along the mainstem Willamette River to restore native floodplain forests.
- Minimal site preparation is needed because the site was managed through an agricultural contract that is coming to an end. The proposed revegetation is timely; it will be important to restore native vegetation before invasive plant species are established.
- Luckiamute Confluence is protected by a conservation easement that will ensure long-term protection and maintenance of investments in habitat restoration.
- A diversity of partners support the project, which is demonstrated by letters of support from OPRD, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Luckiamute Watershed Council, and U.S. Geological Survey.
- The applicant has capacity to implement the project and relevant experience with similar restoration.
- The overall project cost is reasonable for the scale of the project site and potential ecological uplift.

Concerns

- No concerns identified.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed restoration at the Luckiamute Confluence addresses the lack of river-to-floodplain connectivity and riparian deforestation along the Willamette River and its tributaries. Converting 89 acres to floodplain forest will connect with and expand restored riparian communities in the adjacent LSNA to create one of the largest cottonwood galleries on the Willamette River. This will contribute to connecting the network of habitats supporting native fish and wildlife from Ankeny Wildlife Refuge to Adair Village. Restoring floodplain function at the confluence of the Luckiamute and Willamette river is likely to succeed in providing significant ecological uplift.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$419,445

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$419,445

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3009-24011
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: North Santiam Watershed Restoration and Revegetation in Marion County Parks
Applicant: Marion County Public Works
Region: Willamette Basin
County: Marion
OWEB Request: $531,227
Total Cost: $720,398

Application Description The project is located in the North Santiam River basin, a watershed known for strategic conservation investment, diverse partnerships, and high habitat value for myriad T&E species. Since the devastating 2020 fire season, Marion County Public Works (applicant) has monitored fire impacts, collaborated with partners, developed restoration plans, and initiated stabilization on six county parks: North Fork Park, Salmon Falls, Minto, Bear Creek, Niagara, and Packsaddle.

In this phase we graduate a small, restored park (Packsaddle) and add 67.5 acres at- North Santiam park for a new total of 222.3 acres of riparian, wetland and oak woodland habitat restoration and stewardship along the mainstem and tributaries of the North Santiam River. The project implements Marion County Parks' mission—to provide equitable access for diverse communities—and high priority actions named in many recovery and conservation plans.

To remedy stand-replacing fire impacts and restore critical habitat, the 'shovel-ready' project will:

- engage and serve disadvantaged communities;
- work with partners and neighbors to enhance ecological uplift;
- install climate-adaptive and hearty native plant species that will quickly reestablish shade, soil conservation, habitat structure, weed inhibition and other key ecological functions;
- control noxious weeds through proven integrated pest management methods;
- adaptively manage and measure restoration success.

A diverse partnership supports the project: Marion County Parks, North Santiam Watershed Council, Oregon Parks Forever, Marion Soil & Water Conservation District, Oregon Department of Forestry, and US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Army Corps of Engineers. Proposed work builds upon historic and current investments from OWEB, Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program, and other public, Tribal, and private conservation efforts.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Restoration after wildfire is important for restoring native plant species, preventing spread of invasive noxious weeds, and providing ecosystem benefits.
- The proposed project builds on a phase one project funded through an OWEB Post-Fire Recovery grant. Since the 2020 fire season, Marion County Public Works has monitored fire impacts, developed restoration plans, and initiated stabilization projects on several county parks in the North Santiam Watershed.
- Species that typically are successful in establishing in post-fire conditions will be used.
- Proposed actions include monitoring surveys to evaluate progress towards meeting restoration goals. Monitoring from the phase one project was used to inform the proposed revegetation actions.
- Alternatives for restoring areas impacted by wildfire were identified and evaluated. The applicant selected a strategy that focuses on controlling weeds that could affect plant establishment in restored areas and to encourage natural regeneration, which balances consideration of restoration costs with managing revegetation actions across a large geography.
- The project includes a proposed action for engaging the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs.

Concerns

- The application lacks details needed to understand existing site conditions, such as providing acreage and a description of phase one activities that were completed for each of the project sites.
- The proposed actions are generally described in the application. Providing detail explaining the specific actions proposed for each of the project sites would be helpful for understanding how restoration methods will be implemented and address site conditions.
- It is unclear how many acres will be restored. Acres listed in the application may be for the entire parks; however, infrastructure plans have not been completed yet. Restored acres will likely be less than what is stated once park infrastructure is added to the sites.
- Potential aquatic benefits may be overstated in the application; most restoration actions will occur upslope of the riparian areas and will benefit terrestrial plant communities.

- The application budget lacks details needed to understand project costs and evaluate whether costs are reasonable and necessary for achieving the proposed actions and work plan. For example, the budget includes lump sum line items, and it is unclear how funds will be distributed across the project sites. Also, there is a significant mobilization line item with no explanation of what will be mobilized and what action it is related to. Irrigation supplies are listed in the budget as match; however, it is unclear from the application narrative where and how it will be used for achieving the proposed restoration. Finally, project management costs across salaries, wages and benefits and contracted services are unclear. Additional detail is needed in the work plan that describes who these project managers are and what tasks they will be completing to implement the restoration actions.

Concluding Analysis

The North Santiam Watershed provides habitat to a diversity of priority native fish and wildlife species that was severely impacted by the 2020 wildfires. There is a clear need to invest in restoring impacted areas. Information in the application is too generalized, however, to evaluate proposal clarity, technical soundness, and cost effectiveness. Additional detail is needed to better understand existing site conditions and proposed restoration activities across the six county parks and the costs estimated to accomplished restoration goals. If the application is resubmitted, the applicant is encouraged to describe site conditions for each site and separate restoration actions and budget by project sites.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3010-24017
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Recovering System Process in Oak Creek, Phase I
Applicant: Marys River WC
Region: Willamette Basin
County: Benton
OWEB Request: $303,795
Total Cost: $403,503

Application Description Oak Creek is unique in the Marys River watershed, both in the diversity of land uses and in the variety of landowners and other stakeholders in the basin. Oregon State University (OSU) owns 41% of the land in the watershed which flows through the OSU Research Forests and College of Agriculture properties, small acreage residences, a large privately-owned agricultural holding, the City's Bald Hill Natural Area and Greenbelt Land Trust's Bald Hill Farm (BHF). The OSU campus, residential housing developments and the Corvallis urban center are all situated in the lower reach before Oak Creek's confluence with the Willamette River.

Oak Creek is primarily a coastal cutthroat trout stream, though it is also home to Pacific lamprey and other native fish species. Chinook salmon are also known to enter Oak Cr. It is 303(d) listed for temperature.

Oak Creek is disconnected from the floodplain and it is substantially incised in the middle and lower reaches and in some places has down-cut to bedrock. Riparian buffers have been limited in favor of agricultural uses; in years past livestock were able to enter the stream and graze the riparian vegetation. The exposed bedrock has further exacerbated warming of the stream.
This project grew out of the OWEB-funded Stakeholder Engagement grant which identified improving the health and function of the Oak Cr stream system as a top priority, and is the first in a multi-phased approach to restoration. This first phase will take place along a one mile stretch of Oak Cr and includes properties owned by OSU and one private landowner. Project elements include 16 large wood placements, 3 off-channel alcoves and 12.3 acres of invasive species removal and site preparation for riparian planting planned in Phase II. Community engagement opportunities are planned as part of this project and build upon activities already taking place in the watershed.
Project partners include Marys River Watershed Council (MRWC), OSU and private landowners.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The proposed restoration approach focuses on restoring watershed process and function instead of addressing symptoms of disturbance.

- The project builds on previous OWEB Technical Assistance and Engagement investments on Oak Creek.
- The proposed project fits within the context of past restoration occurring in the Oak Creek basin, which will increase connectivity and ecological uplift from this habitat investment.
- Restoring stream conditions on Oak Creek has potential to provide habitat benefits for juvenile spring chinook, coho, coastal cutthroat, and pacific lamprey.
- Oak Creek is listed on the 303(d) list for stream temperature. The proposed restoration will increase shade and build habitat structure that is likely to provide cold water refugia.
- The project provides opportunity for promoting public awareness about habitat restoration because the project site is highly visible due to recreation traffic among the nearby public spaces.
- The project team has capacity and consistent track record implementing similar projects.
- Partner support is demonstrated by letters included in the application and match from Oregon State University, landowners, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Concerns

- Design information provided in the application is conceptual; additional detail describing how the alcoves will be developed is needed to understand the method for this project component. For example, additional information is needed that describes how much material will be excavated to create the alcoves, how the alcoves are expected to function and interact with the springs, and the expectations for how the alcoves will maintain connectivity with Oak Creek in the long term. Also, plans for the spoils marked on the project map included in the application is unclear. With the limited design information, it is challenging to determine technical soundness of the method that will be used to develop the alcoves; it would be helpful to include more information in the application describing what a successful outcome for this project component will look like and how it will be achieved.
- Significant funds are requested for site preparation for a future planting that will be funded through another source. It is challenging to determine whether investment in site preparation is reflective of the expected quantified watershed health benefit without additional detail describing plans for the future planting or certainty the future planting will be funded.
- Plans for working with Oregon State University on long- term stewardship of restored areas is unclear from the application.

- Costs for staff are unclear without an explanation of how their roles are directly related to accomplishing the proposed restoration actions. Additional information is needed in the work plan that describes how the variety of people listed in the budget are involved in accomplishing the restoration actions to evaluate whether costs are reasonable. For example, it appears some staff roles listed in direct costs should be included as indirect costs, and there may be overlap in tasks among staff with project management roles.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project offers a unique opportunity to recover stream system process in Oak Creek in partnership with Oregon State University, which owns 41% of the land in this sub-watershed of the Marys River. The proposed restoration approach has potential for providing water quality and aquatic habitat benefits; however, additional detail describing restoration designs for the alcove and plantings is needed to better understand technical soundness and cost effectiveness of the restoration actions.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3011-24045
Project Name: Coyote Spencer Wetlands Oak and Prairie Habitat Restoration Phase II
Applicant: Long Tom WC
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $276,438

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Lane
Total Cost: $384,697

Application Description McKenzie River Trust's 225-acre Coyote-Spencer Wetlands property sits at the confluence of Coyote and Spencer creeks in the Long Tom Watershed, providing refugia for numerous native wet and upland prairie- and bottomland oak habitat-dependent species. The property is within an Oregon Conservation Strategy Conservation Opportunity Area, Willamette Valley Synthesis Area, and US Fish and Wildlife Service Priority Conservation Area. Prairie and Oak habitats are among the most fragmented and endangered in Oregon. In 1853, surveyors walking the section lines that cross the property described open prairie on the valley bottom intersected by fringes of riparian woodland bordering Coyote and Spencer Creeks. Since then, the lack of frequent fire and human tending has allowed woody plants to encroach, and agricultural activities on site and nearby have displaced prairie plant species with weedy pasture grasses. Still, the site supports 145 native, herbaceous plant species, including Bradshaw's lomatium, Oregon larkspur, thin-leaved peavine, suncups, and Hitchcock's blue-eyed grass. Phase II of this project proposes to remove encroaching woody species from 55 acres of prairie and oak habitat and reintroduce prescribed fire to the site. Long Tom Watershed Council (LTWC) will partner with McKenzie River Trust (MRT), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE), and Department of State Lands (DSL) to carry out the proposed project.

As a result of the scale of habitat loss and function, the Willamette Valley ecoregion is recognized as globally imperiled. This peril is in part due to the conversion of this habitat to working lands, communities, and suppression of cultural fire which the ecoregion had evolved with since time immemorial. The cessation of cultural fire has contributed to the suppression of prairie plant communities. This project aims to maximize resilience of rare and vital ecosystems in the face of climate change.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clearly defined goal and actions for expanding connected and restored fire-adapted Willamette habitats on 55 acres at the confluence of Coyote and Spencer Creeks. The proposed actions for restoring oak and prairie habitats are technically sound and achievable.
- Concerns from the previous application evaluation are addressed by focusing on restoring the oak and prairie acres.

- The proposed restoration is part of a phased project and builds on a previous OWEB investment that is demonstrating success in achieving desired restored oak and prairie habitat conditions.
- The project site is in the West Eugene Conservation Opportunity Area and includes the confluence of Coyote and Spencer Creeks where restoring oak and prairie habitat is a prioritized action in several watershed plans. The proposed actions will also expand connectivity of these habitats with other restoration projects in the area.
- The project site is protected by a conservation easement that will ensure long-term protection and maintenance of investments in habitat restoration.
- The project site will be utilized for cultural practices, including plant harvest and cultural burning.
- The applicant is building capacity and trust for utilizing fire to restore Willamette Valley oak savanna, woodland, and prairie habitats.
- The site has existing plant populations that are listed as threatened, endangered, and sensitive, including thin-leaved peavine, suncups, Hitchcock's blue-eyed grass, and Oregon delphinium.
- Employing goats to control invasive species could provide an effective demonstration of an alternative technique to using herbicides. It will, however, need continued follow up treatments. Target plant species are likely to rapidly resprout if goats are not brought to the site on a regularly basis. Monitoring built into the restoration actions will be helpful for documenting the effectiveness of this experimental approach.
- The proposed project provides opportunity for promoting awareness about watershed restoration that could lead to future project opportunities with neighbors. Volunteer planting events will promote public engagement and visibility of restoration at the site.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the proposed restoration actions. The applicant and landowner have a track record of implementing similar restoration on the project site.
- Costs are appropriate for the restoration actions proposed.
- The budget includes personal protective equipment needed to implement prescribed fire, which addresses a capacity limitation for using fire in habitat restoration.

Concerns

- The proposed plan for using grazing management to maintain ash regrowth may not be aggressive enough to keep up with the rate of ash resprouting and achieve control.

Concluding Analysis

Coyote-Spencer Wetlands is a 255-acre property that sits at the confluence of Coyote and Spencer

Creeks in the Long Tom Watershed and supports 145 native plant species along with a diversity of aquatic and wildlife species. The lack of frequent fire on the land has altered oak savanna, woodland, and prairie habitat structure and function, soil, and plant species composition. The proposed oak and prairie restoration actions will build on previous habitat protection and restoration, which is a high priority for expanding connectivity of these highly imperiled habitats.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$276,438

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$276,438

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3012-24046

Project Name: Blueprint for the Willamette: Emerald Ash Borer Response Pilot Project in Minto-Brown Island Park

Applicant: Pudding River WC

Region: Willamette Basin

OWEB Request: $115,833

Project Type: Restoration_v2

County: Marion

Total Cost: $145,057

Application Description The proposed project is a pilot project to determine best practices for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) management and Oregon ash replacement. If funded, this project will preserve 2,060 linear feet (approx. 7acres) of vital canopy cover along the Willamette River, protect critical ecological function and foster climate change resilience, engage the public in EAB education, and lead to the creation an EAB response plan to inform riparian/floodplain forest conservation and restoration across the mid-Willamette Valley. The project will also protect Tribal/archeological resources, and strengthen partnerships necessary for a comprehensive, effective EAB response.

The project would occur in Minto-Brown Island Park in the City of Salem. The park provides over 1,200 acres of riparian forest along the Willamette River that is located within Conservation Opportunity Area 060 as described in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, supports migrating populations of ESA-listed salmonids, serves as important habitat for wildlife and nesting birds, and is utilized recreationally by the residents of Salem.

Studies show that EAB will impact ESA-listed species and critical ecosystem function in the mid-Willamette Region (Maze et al 2024). Oregon ash is a preferred host for the EAB, an invasive wood-boring beetle which kills 99.9% of trees it infests. EAB was first detected in Oregon in 2022, and a new infestation was discovered within 20 miles of Salem in 2024. Loss of Oregon ash in the project area would reduce canopy cover and contribute to increased water temperatures that reduce habitat suitability for salmonids and other aquatic life.

Restoration work will include removal and treatment of invasive vegetation and underplanting to establish native overstory trees which can provide a multitude of ecosystem benefits and replace canopy loss due to Oregon ash mortality. Project partners include the City of Salem, Elderberry Wisdom Farms, NRCS, USFWS, and Ash Creek Forest Management.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project is ready for implementation with a well thought out plan to establish trees and shrubs that will prevent invasive plants from establishing when Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) cause native ash to die out.
- EAB has been found in nearby locations in the Willamette and will likely impact Minto Brown Island Park in the next one to two years. The applicant s to capture lessons learned and share them with restoration practitioners to help plan for EAB mitigation and impacts at a broader scale.
- Minto Brown Island Park is located on the mainstem of the Willamette River. It is identified as anchor habitat within the Willamette River Floodplain Conservation Opportunity Area. The park provides valuable habitat to a diversity of migratory birds, wildlife, amphibians, and fish.
- Project actions include conducting a cultural resources survey. The applicant is encouraged to prioritize leaving found artifacts in place.
- A qualified contractor that has implemented similar riparian plant revegetation projects at the project site is identified to complete planting actions.
- The applicant has the capacity to implement the project with roles defined for each project manager.
- The proposed project provides opportunity for promoting awareness through signage about watershed restoration and EAB. Minto Brown Island Park is the largest, and a highly valued, greenspace within the City of Salem that is heavily visited by the public.

Concerns

- Additional detail describing how actions will be implemented and the expected effects of those actions would strengthen the application.
- Potential stream temperature benefits from the proposed restoration may be overstated in the application due to the small scale of the planting activities.
- Access to project areas may be limited at times and affect project implementation when Willamette River flows are high and the river reconnects with its floodplain.
- There are two items in the application that are not fully described: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is listed as a partner and there is no follow up explanation describing their role or a letter of support included in the application; it is unclear how the air curtain incinerator demonstration listed as match in the budget is directly related to implementing the proposed restoration actions.

Concluding Analysis

EAB is likely to impact riparian and floodplain ash plant communities in coming years. This will reduce shade, which will impact water and habitat quality. The proposed restoration actions to control noxious weeds and underplant Oregon ash dominated forest in a portion of the Minto Brown Island Park provide an opportunity to experiment with solutions that could build habitat resilience before the full impacts of

EAB.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

7 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$115,833

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$115,833

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3013-24054
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Riverside Park Biocultural Restoration Project - Revegetation
Applicant: Clackamas River Basin Council
Region: Willamette Basin
County: Clackamas
OWEB Request: $64,967
Total Cost: $98,481

Application Description CRBC's Riverside Park project takes a multifaceted approach to river restoration that includes riparian ecological enhancement, education and stewardship activities for BIPOC and at-risk youth, Indigenous perspectives through art and interpretation, and community surveys - all with the intention of improving drinking water quality and habitat for migratory fish. The outcome of this project includes 12 acres of restored floodplain habitat at Riverside Park, a public greenspace on the Clackamas River with a drinking water intake onsite, and significant community benefit to native fish and wildlife, underserved communities, park users and the 300,000 people who rely on the Clackamas River for drinking water.

This grant will enable CRBC and youth contractors to install 8,500 native trees, shrubs, and graminoids at the project site following site preparation and to maintain plantings for three years afterward (funding for noxious weed management before planting is already secured).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has a clearly defined goal and actions for removing noxious weeds and installing native riparian trees and shrubs on 13 acres along the mainstem Clackamas River. Building a mature and diverse riparian forest at the project site will increase shade and restore understory habitat.
- The project builds on planting projects implemented throughout the Clackamas Watershed through the applicant’s Shade Our Streams program.
- The project site is located within the Clackamas Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) geography and sits between four large floodplain restoration projects. The Clackamas FIP focuses on restoring instream habitats; restoring riparian vegetation leverages these FIP investments by increasing shade and habitat connectivity.
- Climate-adapted plant species will be used for plantings to increase long-term resilience of the riparian forest.

- Funding for treating noxious weeds and beginning site preparation for plantings is secured.
- Project methods include reasonable target measures of success in plant survival and plans for long-term stewardship.
- The project provides opportunity for promoting awareness about watershed restoration. Clackamas Riverside Park is well-used and signage at kiosks have already been effective in communicating about the watershed. Riverside Park is also located in a census tract identified as disadvantaged by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool and already provides outdoor access to disadvantaged communities.
- The applicant has capacity to implement the project and relevant experience with similar planting projects.
- Costs are reasonable for the proposed actions and expected quantified watershed benefits.

Concerns

- Since the project site is located on the northwest side of the Clackamas River, benefits of increasing shade that will impact stream temperatures will be limited and may be overstated in the application.
- Ongoing potential impacts to replanted areas from public access can be challenging to manage.

Concluding Analysis

Enhancing riparian plant communities in Riverside Park with climate-adapted species will build resilience in a priority watershed that supports Endangered Species Act-listed fish. The overall project cost is reasonable for the expected ecological uplift and ecosystem benefits.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

6 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$64,967

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$64,967

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3014-23983
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: WOH! White Oak Hubs: Oak and Prairie Restoration in the NE Willamette Valley
Applicant: Pudding River WC
Region: Willamette Basin
County: Marion
OWEB Request: $51,068
Total Cost: $53,808

Application Description

1. Project location - Four sites:

A - Mt. Angel Abbey

311 acre property: 35 acres of campus/buildings, 133 acres of oak dominant habitat (42% prairie/savanna, 58% woodland). 143 of fir dominant habitat.

B- Corban University

204 acre property: 77 acres of campus/buildings. 41 acres of oak woodland, 46 acres of grassland/prairie, 40 acres of fir dominant habitat.

C- Oregon Garden

127 acre property: 40 acres of buildings/garden, 22 acres of oak dominant habitat (40% prairie/savanna, 60% woodland). 29 acres of constructed wetland. 31 acres of fir woodland with some oak, 30% of that open meadows.

D- The Small Farm and Indigo Sanctuary

90 acre property: 7 acres of farm buildings and pasture. 47 acres of pristine riparian canyon habitat, mixed mature forest with oak on margins. 36 acres of cropped grass seed fields (two fields).

2. Project Need

No Oregon white oak and prairie anchor sites exist in the northeastern part of Marion County. Creating these model restoration sites would fill in a blank spot in the oak restoration map, better support wildlife, and greatly benefit public access to restored white oak habitat and local knowledge of white oak restoration best practices.

3. Proposed Work

Pudding River Watershed Council (PRWC) will hire the Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE) to map and survey existing oak and prairie habitat, create a long-term conservation and management plan for each site, and outline future restoration projects for each site. PRWC staff will work alongside IAE staff and assist with mapping, surveying and writing, both as a way to reduce contractor costs, and to strengthen our professional expertise in this ecologically important ecosystem. PRWC staff will also handle all

landowner communication and project management.

4. Project Partners
Institute for Applied Ecology
Marion SWCD
All four involved landowners

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- There is a clear need to protect and restore oak habitat and build “stepping-stones” that increase connectivity of this habitat type.
- The project scope and scale is described by information that characterizes habitat on the four selected properties that includes total acreage for each location and a breakdown of those acres into developed areas and habitat types.
- The applicant is increasing their technical capacity by contracting qualified consultants to survey habitat and develop conservation and management plans for each site. The contractor has relevant experience and will use professionally accepted data collection and planning approaches.
- Landowners are actively engaged in the project, which is demonstrated by letters of support included in the application.
- The roles of the contractors and staff listed in the budget that will implement the technical assistance actions are clearly described in the project work plan.
- Costs are reasonable for the proposed actions.

Concerns

- Depending on the quality of existing oak habitat at the project sites, a future restoration application may not be a priority if the project sites have only marginal quality habitat where investing in ecological uplift will provide limited benefits for the cost. It will be important to document why the sites are a priority for restoration.
- TMDL is referenced in the problem section of the application; however, it is unclear how the proposed upland oak restoration planning will lead to watershed benefits related to the TMDL.
- Breaking out the lump sum for the contractor costs into technical writing or surveys would be helpful for understanding the project budget.

Concluding Analysis

Oak restoration at public facing sites has potential for restoring stepping-stones of habitat in Marion County that could raise awareness and lead to future projects on private lands that connect corridors of

habitat. Oregon white oak woodland, savanna, and native prairie habitats in Marion County has experienced similar losses as seen across the Willamette Valley. Also, there have not been as many opportunities to protect and restore these habitats in Marion County compared to other areas in the valley. The proposed technical assistance is building landowner interest in oak habitat in the middle Willamette and generating momentum that could lead to restoration projects.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 4

Review Team Recommended Amount

$51,068

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$51,068

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3015-23986
Project Name: Bilyeu Creek Beginnings
Applicant: South Santiam WC
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $175,204

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Linn
Total Cost: $193,497

Application Description This proposal presents Phase 1 of a multiple-phase restoration strategy for Bilyeu Creek: alternatives analysis and selection of the preferred alternative. The South Santiam Watershed Council (SSWC) will seek separate funding for the final design completion and implementation. Phase 1 sets the stage for high-impact restoration implementation on privately owned land in the Thomas Creek basin, in Linn County. It involves close collaboration between the SSWC, a highly regarded environmental engineering firm, and engaged private landowners.

Phase 1 seeks to evaluate the site thoroughly in order to understand the best options for restoration. Key tasks include a baseline desktop review to develop a detailed base map, including data elements such as site topography, calibrated aerial imagery, and mapped natural resources. This phase also involves evaluating LiDAR data to ensure it meets the project's needs for designing alternatives. The engineering firm will conduct desktop reviews and collect field note data on geomorphic conditions and biological diversity to begin understanding the geology and diversity of the creek and surrounding areas. Anticipated habitat improvements will benefit many important fish and wildlife species, including increased spawning and rearing habitat for federally listed Chinook salmon and steelhead.

The successful execution of this phase will provide a robust foundation for restoration action on Bilyeu Creek, ensuring that subsequent phases of the project are based on sound science and detailed, site-specific data. This groundwork will produce a selected preferred alternative that, when implemented, will enhance habitat quality and resilience on Bilyeu Creek, significantly benefiting the Thomas Creek basin, its biodiversity, and the community.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Bilyeu Creek is a tributary of Thomas Creek in the South Santiam Watershed. Thomas Creek is on the 303(d) list of water quality impaired waterbodies for exceeding water temperature standards and provides critical habitat for Upper Willamette Chinook and steelhead. The expected future restoration project is likely to improve water quality that will benefit Bilyeu and Thomas Creeks.
- The application clearly describes proposed actions and includes photos and conceptual design maps that are helpful for understanding the site conditions and landscape context for the project.

- The proposed data collection and engineering approaches are technically sound.
- A range of alternatives will be analyzed and considered through a collaborative process that includes the consultant team, applicant, and landowners, and will be informed by feedback from state and federal agency partners.
- Staff and contractor roles in implementing the project actions are clearly described in the project work plan.
- Significant landowner support for the project is demonstrated by letters provided with the application.
- There is potential to utilize the project as an example to promote future restoration with other large-scale agricultural landowners in the Thomas Creek Watershed.
- The selected engineering firm is qualified to accomplish the proposed technical assistance; however, the project site is considerably smaller compared to the larger scale projects the firm typically completes.

Concerns

- It is unclear if the resulting design will prioritize addressing causes of watershed disturbance instead of symptoms. The project appears to focus on bank stabilization over addressing habitat limiting factors and stream function. This will likely limit the fish habitat benefits that can result from treating erosion over the small 0.6-mile stream reach.
- It is unclear how the match identified in the application is related to the project because it appears to be related to restoration implementation instead of accomplishing the goals and objectives of the proposed technical assistance.
- Costs for the selected engineering consultant are high because the contractor is highly specialized. The application states that the contractor was selected because there are no other firms available to complete the project and not to meet a need for specialized engineering. It is unclear how previous evaluation concerns related to higher costs for engineering when a highly specialized engineering firm is not needed are addressed. The project is framed as a potential demonstration site; however, a high-cost project addressing erosion across a short stream reach that has a limited potential for ecological habitat uplift may not be a cost-effective approach to serve as a demonstration.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed technical assistance has potential to lead to restoration that could be a demonstration site and build trust for collaborative, voluntary watershed restoration in the Thomas Creek community. Additional information is needed to understand how the proposed technical assistance is cost effective and is likely to lead to future restoration that addresses causes of watershed disturbance over treating symptoms.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3016-23989
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: Luckiamute Confluence Cultural Resources Assessment
Applicant: Greenbelt Land Trust
Region: Willamette Basin
County: Polk
OWEB Request: $60,098
Total Cost: $63,180

Application Description The Luckiamute Confluence property, recently acquired by Greenbelt Land Trust, is a key addition to a growing network of protected lands, located just five miles north of Albany at Willamette River mile 110.5. Nestled between two sections of the Luckiamute Landing State Natural Area (LSNA), this 106-acre parcel is the missing piece that connects and extends over 1,000 acres of protected floodplain habitat. With 0.42 miles of Willamette River frontage and the Luckiamute and Santiam rivers confluence just upstream, this is one of the most significant sites for fish and wildlife in the mid-Willamette Valley. The Willamette Planning Atlas highlights it as one of the best opportunities for restoration on the Willamette River.

This property has been in active farmland production as far back as 1936 with only a thin band of riparian forest remaining along its edges. As a critical first step to permanently retire all agriculture activities and create 89 acres of prime floodplain forest habitat, Greenbelt has partnered with SWCA Environmental Consultant (SWCA) Cultural Resource Team to conduct a cultural resources assessment of the Luckiamute Confluence property. This assessment will adopt a thorough and comprehensive approach to meet Section 106 compliance requirements and will ensure that floodplain forest and connectivity restoration actions are well-informed and culturally responsible. It will include background research, field surveys, and reporting and coordination with the Tribes, OWEB and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). This assessment is a key foundational step in preparation for the companion OWEB Restoration grant and project proposal ‘Luckiamute Confluence Floodplain Restoration Phase 1’.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application describes clear actions for completing a cultural resource assessment needed to implement the companion restoration project. That project will establish a diverse multi-canopy hardwood forest across 89 acres to improve water and habitat quality and quantity for fish and wildlife impacted by habitat loss and fragmentation along the Willamette River.
- The cultural resources assessment of the Area of Potential Effect will likely meet Section 106 compliance for restoring floodplain habitat at the Luckiamute River confluence. The proposed survey will include appropriate data collection and analysis.

- The project site is nestled between two tracts of the Luckiamute Landing State Natural Area (LSNA). The LSNA was ranked by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) as the seventh most important area to prioritize restoration across its 255-property ownership. The Luckiamute Confluence property is the missing link, offering a rare chance to restore more than 1,000 acres of continuous floodplain forest and greatly enhance river-floodplain interactions.
- The project builds on significant watershed investments at LSNA that occurred for over a decade by OWEB, Meyer Memorial Trust, and Bonneville Power Administration that are showing significant outcomes from restoring floodplain forests.
- The project lies within an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Opportunity Area and restoration actions will benefit priority fish, amphibian, and bird strategy species identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy.
- The applicant is prioritizing leaving any artifacts they find during ground disturbance in place.
- The timeline is clear for the cultural resource compliance tasks, the current revegetation restoration project and how the cultural resource survey will inform future restoration that will require earthwork. The cultural resource assessment will be timed to facilitate adjusting plans for earthwork as needed and future earthwork will not impact revegetation portions of the project moving forward in the near term.
- The selected contractor is qualified for the proposed technical assistance.
- The applicant is already engaging the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, which is demonstrated by letters of support from both Tribes.
- Project costs are appropriate for the proposed actions.

Concerns

- No concerns identified.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed technical assistance will ensure National Historic Preservation Act requirements are met for the companion Luckiamute Confluence Restoration Phase 1 project. This restoration project addresses the lack of river-to-floodplain connectivity and riparian deforestation along the Willamette River and its tributaries. Retiring agricultural uses on this 89-acre site and converting it to floodplain forest will connect with and expand restored riparian communities on the adjacent LSNA to create one of the largest cottonwood galleries on the Willamette River.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 4

Review Team Recommended Amount

$60,098

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$60,098

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3017-24000
Project Name: Sandy Basin Climate Change Analysis
Applicant: The Freshwater Trust
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $159,402

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Clackamas
Total Cost: $216,616

Application Description The Sandy River originates on Mt. Hood and flows 56 miles northwest before entering the Columbia River near Portland, Oregon. Sandy River salmon and steelhead are listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). The Sandy River Basin Partners (Partners) are engaged in basin-scale planning and implementation efforts to restore these fish. After 16 years of implementing successful restoration work and collecting habitat and fish response data in the upper Sandy, the Partners are updating their restoration strategy to ensure efforts remain on the right trajectory.

On behalf of the Partners, The Freshwater Trust (TFT) is seeking funding from OWEB to complete a climate change impacts analysis for Sandy salmon and steelhead. With this funding, the Partners will contract with ICF to use climate change temperature and precipitation run-off models to inform changes to attributes that will be input into a Sandy Ecosystem Diagnosis & Treatment (EDT) fish habitat relationship model. The Partners' original restoration strategy was underpinned by the same EDT model but utilized 1990s climate data. The proposed project will model future climate change scenarios (years 2040 and 2080) to identify changes to limiting factors. Project work products will allow the Partners to update their guiding restoration strategy to ensure future work provides suitable habitat for salmon, steelhead, and Pacific lamprey under a changing climate.

Primary members of the Sandy River Basin Partners engaged in the proposed project include TFT, US Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and City of Portland.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- An Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment (EDT) model will be used to understand the impacts of climate change on fish populations and their habitats to plan restoration that addresses limiting factors described in the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Recovery Plan for Lower Columbia River Coho Salmon, Lower Columbia River Chinook Salmon, Columbia River Chum Salmon, and Lower Columbia River Steelhead.

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by including lists of metrics that will be used, expanding from a single species focus on salmon and steelhead to include lamprey, and explaining why this analysis is important at this time. The EDT model will use habitat information along with predicted future stream flow and temperature. The product could facilitate building new strategic restoration plans for early action that mitigate for expected climate change impacts to stream conditions. Conducting the EDT analysis now with updated climate data will help the Sandy Basin Partners take action with a more targeted restoration prioritization in advance of potential climate change effects.

- The selected EDT model has been utilized for over 25 years to provide watershed restoration prioritization and planning information. It will be used to complete a limiting factors analysis at both stream reach and Sandy River Basin scales.

- The application describes a need for assessing restoration strategies to determine if adjustments should be made for climate change predictions to protect past habitat project investments, which includes over ten years of grants from OWEB.

- Partner support is demonstrated by match.

- The applicant and partners have capacity and experience in effectively collaborating at the proposed scope and scale of the project. The applicant has used the proposed EDT model for the Sandy River watershed in the past.

- A contractor with relevant qualifications in climate change analysis is selected to implement the EDT model.

- Project costs align with the proposed technical assistance actions and specialized expertise needed to complete the EDT model.

Concerns

- The EDT model focuses on watershed form and not on restoring watershed process and function, which could limit its efficacy in providing a more holistic picture for planning restoration.

- While the EDT approach is likely to provide useful information, it is unclear whether incorporating the climate change scenarios will have different results compared to past EDT modeling that was used to inform restoration in the Sandy Basin. It may not provide information that clearly indicates the current on-the-ground restoration techniques and strategies need to change. For example, the map for wood placement included in the application is similar to the locations where restoration is already occurring. There may be merit to the proposed technical assistance though if the model confirms the actions underway are the highest priority actions and locations for building resilience to climate change.

Concluding Analysis

Significant investment has been made to implement the Sandy River Basin Aquatic Habitat Restoration

Strategy. Monitoring has shown statistically significant increases in the production of coho and steelhead smolts and spawning spring and fall Chinook adults since implementation of that strategy. Assessing possible impacts of climate change on the abundance, productivity, capacity, and life history diversity of ESA-listed salmon and steelhead populations in the Sandy to update restoration strategies may be needed to maintain these previous gains. The technical assistance product could also provide information for better understanding how long-term restoration in the Sandy Basin is already building resilience to climate change impacts.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 4

Review Team Recommended Amount

$159,402

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$159,402

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3018-24022

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2

Project Name: Lacomb Irrigation District Fish Screen and Main Canal Improvement Project - Conceptual Design

Applicant: Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA)

Region: Willamette Basin

County: Linn

OWEB Request: $99,970

Total Cost: $172,471

Application Description The Lacomb Irrigation District Fish Screen and Main Canal Improvement - Conceptual Design project will help to address limiting factors for resident and anadromous fish populations in Crabtree Creek, a tributary of the South Santiam River. The project will be located near the Lacomb Irrigation District diversion at approximately river mile 26.5 on Crabtree Creek, approximately located 20 miles east of Lebanon, Oregon.

District infrastructure and operations contribute to downstream fish passage, streamflow, and water quality limitations in Crabtree Creek. The District's fish screen facility does not perform as well as possible, particularly during high-flow and low-flow periods in Crabtree Creek, affecting downstream fish passage. The District's Main Canal loses approximately 3.9 cfs due to seepage and evaporation in its first 3.5 miles, meaning that the District needs to divert more water than it delivers for irrigation use and hydropower production.

This project will develop a conceptual design to: (1) upgrade the fish screen facility with a new intake, shorter screen, and new fish return to increase water velocity, reduce fish holding times, and improve fish return functionality to Crabtree Creek and (2) replace the existing open canal with a buried pipeline, minimizing water losses and creating opportunities to restore streamflow to Crabtree Creek. Farmers Conservation Alliance will engage with the District and stakeholders to ensure that the project will, when constructed, provide agricultural, environmental, and community benefits.

Farmers Conservation Alliance will lead this project in partnership with Lacomb Irrigation District.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application describes a clear need for the design technical assistance by explaining the current condition of the Lacomb Irrigation District’s Main Canal and fish screen facility and its impacts to resident and anadromous fish in Crabtree Creek.

- Crabtree Creek is a tributary to the South Santiam River that is listed as critical habitat for salmon and steelhead and is on the 303(d) list for impaired water quality due to stream temperatures exceeding spawning and year-round temperature criteria. Improving the fish screen facility will address habitat limiting factors by preventing fish mortality and improving water quality.
- Local Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife staff confirmed a solution is needed at the project site to prevent fish returning to a side-channel that has sub-optimal habitat conditions.
- The proposed data collection and engineering approaches are technically sound.
- There is potential for future water savings in Crabtree Creek that could become protected conserved water, which will contribute to improving water temperature.
- The applicant has relevant experience implementing fish screen projects and working with irrigation districts to conserve water.
- The technical assistance project includes community engagement to ensure the final project is designed to integrate their needs with habitat restoration.
- The potential future restoration and water savings is worth the technical assistance investment.

Concerns

- Additional information describing existing conditions at the fish screen, such as sweeping velocity, that are negatively impacting fish would provide helpful context.
- The overall project cost is high for a conceptual design product.

Concluding Analysis

Improving fish passage and habitat on Crabtree Creek is a high priority for Endangered Species Act (ESA)- listed fish. The technical assistance also has potential for leading to conserved instream water, which is a unique opportunity for the Willamette region.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 4

Review Team Recommended Amount

$99,970

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$99,970

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3019-23968
Project Name: Chehalem Mountain Groundwater Stakeholder Engagement
Applicant: Greater Yamhill Watershed Council
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $34,505

Project Type: Engagement_v2
County: Yamhill
Total Cost: $42,365

Application Description The Chehalem Mountain Groundwater Limited Area (GLA) is located in Yamhill and Washington counties. This GLA was designated by the Department of Water Resources in 1991. This area is within the Chehalem Valley, part of the Willamette River basin. The Valley is within the growing Portland-metro area, experiencing population pressure. Much of the area is not served by public water, so many water users depend on deep individual wells. The south-facing slopes in Yamhill County are also highly desirable for agricultural production. The goal of this engagement project is to secure quality water in sufficient quantity for all users, including aquatic and upland species.

Existing grant-funded work through the Tualatin SWCD is occurring on the Washington County side of the GLA to develop an understanding of groundwater use. Little is known about water use and quantity issues on the Yamhill County side of the GLA.

This project is a pilot approach that will demonstrate how engagement related to water quantity issues can lead to restoration projects that have multiple benefits to both water quantity and quality. The proposed work will include communication and engagement with landowners, organizations and the community about water quantity issues in the Chehalem Mountain area. Stakeholder engagement will inform future technical studies and lead to watershed restoration projects in the area.

Major waterbodies include Ayers, Bryan, and Hess Creeks, and several tributaries to Chehalem Creek, the Tualatin River and Wapato Creek. All waterbodies are tributaries to the Willamette River.

Project partners include the Yamhill SWCD, Tualatin SWCD, Oregon Water Resources Department, Sustainable Solutions of Newberg/Dundee, KGH Engineering, Chehalem Mountain Winegrowers, Oregon Wine Board and. Save Chehalem Mountain. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Yamhill County, and Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue will also be included in project planning and implementation.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous project evaluation concerns were addressed by adding letters of support, providing details describing engagement actions, including information about the target audiences, and clarifying how the proposed engagement is expected to lead to specific agricultural and residential water conservation projects.
- A variety of actions are proposed to engage specific audiences in the Chehalem Mountain Groundwater Limited Area, including open houses and surveys.
- The proposed engagement models an existing water conservation program implemented by the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District.
- The applicant project manager has a background in public policy and water use projects that is relevant to the proposed engagement actions.
- Costs are reasonable for the proposed actions.

Concerns

- Population is rapidly growing in the project area due to the proximity to Portland, and there are no limitations on domestic well or septic systems in the area. It is unclear how future restoration actions resulting from the engagement project will address water quantity problems if new users can be approved to utilize any conserved water. Without efforts by partners to limit groundwater use and maintain water conservation gains in the future, it is uncertain whether the proposed engagement can lead to addressing the underlying problem of increasing water demand in the project area that is impacting water quality and quantity.
- The application indicates the project will benefit salmon; however, there is no explanation in the narrative on how the potential future restoration actions will directly improve fish habitat. The project area provides limited fish habitat benefit and is not a high priority for salmon or steelhead.
- The roles for the civil engineer and outreach and engagement specialist listed in the budget are unclear. Additional detail in the project work plan describing the relevant experience for these contractors and their role in implementing the proposed actions would be helpful for understanding these costs.

Concluding Analysis

There is a need to address water quality and quantity in the Chehalem Mountain Groundwater Limited Area. It is unclear, however, how the proposed engagement can lead to restoration projects that protect or restore natural watershed functions to improve water quality or stream flows by addressing the cause of disturbance instead of managing the symptoms. Any future water savings expected from the potential restoration actions identified will have uncertain impact in addressing the watershed problem described if new and existing water users can continue to increase water use.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3020-24007
Project Name: Equitable Regional Transportation Planning
Applicant: Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $172,158

Project Type: Engagement_v2
County: Multnomah
Total Cost: $268,568

Application Description Within the Greater Portland-Vancouver region, two partnerships, the Oak Prairie Working Group and the Regional Habitat Connectivity Working Group were formed to address top identified conservation gaps identified in a large partner-driven planning vision, the Regional Conservation Strategy for the Greater Portland-Vancouver Region. Both partnerships have newly developed Strategic Action Plans that align with OWEB guidance, strong collaborative partners, and committed Steering Committees. This grant aims to boost working group capacity to identify and implement shared priority conservation projects, focus on upcoming 2023 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) projects, and reduce threats to existing Oregon white oak patches and their connecting corridors in the greater Portland region.
See: https://www.oregonmetro.gov/regional-transportation-plan

We will create intentional engagement between transportation planners, local jurisdictions, low equity communities, and working group partners resulting in more ecologically friendly, equitable conservation outcomes for future RTP projects. Specifically, the RHCWG will identify at least 10, 2023 RTP project areas with strong potential to influence oak habitat, hire a shared engagement coordinator to lead the engagement process, and work with partners to find mutually beneficial solutions. At least half of the 10 RTP projects will be in low equity neighborhoods.

The two working groups share geographic boundaries, but have different membership compositions, missions, goals, activities, and mapping products developed through years of investments. These partnerships are unique to Oregon, they bring conservation to urban neighborhoods and the rural-urban interface, and communicate with large numbers of stakeholders in Oregon and southwest Washington. Work under this grant will focus on oak-rich areas within Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties within the current Urban Growth Boundary; also the RTP's boundary.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Transportation planners, conservation partners, and local communities and jurisdictions will be engaged to raise awareness of oak and prairie habitats and participate in regional transportation plan conversations to reduce threats to these habitats. Habitat fragmentation due to urbanization and associated transportation projects is a key threat to oak and prairie habitats and the wildlife species that rely on them.
- The application clearly describes actions for multi-directional communications with appropriate audiences in an appropriate geography needed to increase awareness for the importance of oak and prairie habitats and connectivity across them, and to empower local communities to influence transportation projects and avoid them impacting sensitive habitats.
- The application includes quantifiable measures of success; for example, identifying ten Regional Transportation Plan project areas with high potential to affect important oak habitat.
- Protecting oak and prairie habitats in the Portland Metro area from further habitat fragmentation is a priority in Oak Prairie Working Group and Regional Habitat Connectivy Working Group Strategic Action Plans. Working with transportation planners early in the process is critical for incorporating adjustments into plans that reduce habitat impacts from transportation projects. The resulting planning information also has potential for leading to acquisition projects by Metro that will further protect these habitats.
- Communities most affected by transportation projects will be engaged. At least five of the Regional Transportation Plan project areas will be identified in low-equity areas based on Metro’s equity focus areas. Transportation projects often impact oak habitats because these habitats tend to offer open and somewhat dry landscapes that are easy to develop, and transportations projects also tend to disproportionately affect low equity communities.
- Two well established habitat connectivity groups working in the Portland Metro region will combine efforts in reducing threats to existing Oregon white oak patches and their connecting corridors in the greater Portland region. Each working group has experience implementing related engagement and planning projects.
- The application includes letters and match demonstrating partner support and roles.
- The budget narrative clearly describes how costs were estimated.

Concerns

- It is uncertain whether the proposed engagement can limit impacts of transportation projects and result in protecting oak and prairie habitat because it will depend on policy decisions to limit development. It is unclear if the investment is cost-effective if the only result is identifying areas for protection and it does not alter transportation project plans in a way that protects priority quality habitats. Working with transportation planners early in the process, along with Metro's involvement, could ensure the product is used in a meaningful way and the investment may be worth testing to pilot habitat protection in urban settings.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project offers a way to organize and work together for the purpose of avoiding impacts to oak habitat in the Portland Metro area in order to protect it. The potential ecological outcomes expected include reducing loss of native oak and prairie habitat, retaining biological diversity, and maintaining habitat connectivity for the more than 200 wildlife and 300 plant species in the Pacific Northwest that depend on oak and prairie ecosystems. Oak habitat in urban areas is rapidly disappearing due to urbanization and associated transportation projects. Once these habitats are impacted, they are difficult to impossible to restore. The engagement project will pilot an approach for communities and planners to convene and work together to protect these habitats.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 3

Review Team Recommended Amount

$172,158

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3021-24026
Project Name: Willamette Confluence: Stakeholder Engagement Fall 2024 Application
Applicant: McKenzie River Trust
Region: Willamette Basin
OWEB Request: $199,005

Project Type: Engagement_v2
County: Lane
Total Cost: $233,891

Application Description The Willamette Confluence is a place of coming together both ecologically and socially and it presents several potential paths toward the future. With 1,305 acres of mixed riparian and upland oak habitat in the Mount Pisgah area of the upper Willamette Valley, the property provides significant wildlife habitat near the urban core. Located where the Coast Fork and Middle Fork of the Willamette River converge, the area is rich in biodiversity and opportunities for restoration, collaborative management, and community interaction. The Confluence property is bordered by City, County, nonprofit-owned, and private lands, and is adjacent to the most visited park in Lane County.

McKenzie River Trust acquired the property through transfer from The Nature Conservancy in Oregon in 2023. Since then, we have been getting to know the land and better understand the opportunities for addressing regional goals related to water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, climate resilience, urban planning, and equity. We are seeking support in a Stakeholder Engagement grant to convene with partners to develop a shared vision and action plans for coordinated stewardship and community engagement across the Confluence, adjacent lands, and further upstream in the watersheds. The Stakeholder Engagement project will include the development of a shared 20-year conservation vision and more specific habitat restoration and community engagement action plans that integrate with watershed assessments, strategic initiatives, and other planning approaches partners rely on. Key collaborators are those making land management decisions in the area, including city, county, and state governments, utility boards, nonprofit organizations, Tribal representatives, and neighbors. A list of partners can be found in Appendix 1.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The proposed development of a 20-year shared vision for stewardship and conservation at the Willamette Confluence is likely to result in protection or restoration of watershed function and habitat at this 1,300-acre site located where the coast and middle forks of the Willamette River converge. The Willamette Confluence is a complex site where priority habitats intersect with recreational access. Combining conversations to establish a long-term vision along with short-term prioritization and action planning for restoration, acquisition, and public access is a technically sound approach to meet the complex needs at the project site.

- There is a clear path from the proposed community engagement to potential on-the-ground acquisition and restoration projects that will protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat. Any future projects will build on previous OWEB Restoration and Acquisition investments at the site.
- The applicant will engage appropriate audiences in the appropriate geography that includes a diversity of organizations and community members, including nonprofit organizations, Tribes, local public agencies, and utilities.
- Stipends and honoraria will be offered to break down barriers to participation for BIPOC participants and provide capacity to Tribes and nonprofits to participate.
- The planning process will include consideration for changing climate conditions and public access for people with limited mobility.
- Project costs align with the level of engagement needed to plan for the scale and complexity of the Willamette Confluence Preserve.
- The applicant has the capacity and relevant experience and knowledge for implementing the project.
- The application budget includes both in-house resources along with contractors to complete tasks when additional expertise is needed.

Concerns

- Some of the partners identified in the application did not provide letters of support that would be helpful for understanding their commitment to the project.
- Including details describing potential frequency and timeline for meetings would be helpful for understanding whether the proposed year is a sufficient timeframe to accomplish the proposed actions.
- Including specific examples of restoration actions that are likely to result from the engagement project would be helpful to better understand potential habitat and watershed outcomes.
- While the budget narrative indicates stipends will compensate nonprofit organizations and Tribes to participate in the process, the number of units in the budget listed for the stipends appear to be for more organizations. The list of approximately 20 organizations expected to participate in the process includes public agencies in addition to nonprofits and Tribes and the budget includes an estimate for 20 stipends. It is unclear whether public agencies would receive stipends and why it would be needed if the project is part of their service area.

Concluding Analysis

The Willamette Confluence is a complex site where a diversity of environmental stressors impact terrestrial and aquatic habitats. Previous floodplain restoration completed at the site indicates there is significant potential for further restoration to provide quality habitat for a diversity of priority aquatic and

terrestrial species. Community and partner engagement is needed to collaboratively solve the complex challenges and needs of the site, including long term maintenance of restored habitats and managing public access. Aligning priorities, strategies, and actions among the network of partners connected to the Willamette Confluence is a necessary step to coordinate future projects that effectively restore and protect diverse habitats at this large-scale site.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund with Conditions

Review Team Priority

1 of 3

Review Team Recommended Amount

$199,005

Review Team Conditions

Stipends shall be limited to compensating for staff time contributed from nonprofit organizations and Tribes participating in the project.

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund Reduced with Conditions

Staff Recommended Amount

$190,352

Staff Conditions

Stipends shall be limited to compensating for staff time contributed from nonprofit organizations and Tribes participating in the project. The award is reduced to meet 10% de minimis policy.

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Willamette Basin (Region 3)

Application Name: 225-3022-24032
Project Type: Engagement_v2
Project Name: Engaging Landowners to Protect Land with Restored Oak Habitat
Applicant: Oregon Agricultural Trust
Region: Willamette Basin
County: Benton
OWEB Request: $93,100
Total Cost: $99,850

Application Description 1) Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT) will partner with farmers and ranchers for conservation on private agricultural (ag) land in the Willamette Valley, focusing on Yamhill, Polk and Benton Counties.

2) Compared to pre-European settlement, <10% of the Willamette Valley's oak woodlands and <3% of oak savanna remains. Nearly all remaining oak habitat is on privately owned (often ag) land.

Over 1 million acres of the Willamette Basin is devoted to ag. Willamette Valley farmland is more at risk of fragmentation and development than any other region of Oregon. When farmland and its associated habitat is developed, public investment in watersheds is irrevocably lost. Moreover, landscape-scale conservation is much more efficient on larger parcels. Therefore, using working land conservation easements to prevent development and fragmentation in the Willamette Valley will enable effective implementation of regional conservation efforts.

This funding will help OAT build existing and new relationships with ag landowners with associated oak habitat in this region to protect the land, provide cultural access to Tribal members, and increase participation in conservation activities funded by OWEB and NRCS.

3) Project activities are:
a) 1:1 meetings with 20 landowners, with 6 good easement prospects
b) Educational handout on providing cultural access to oak habitat for Tribal members (vetted by Tribal members)
c) Powerpoint on how/why to protect, restore and provide cultural access to oak habitat, including tax implications
d) Share materials at 3 events, social media, and OAT and partner landowner meetings
e) Article about why/how to protect, restore and provide cultural access to oak habitat via easement and partner programs, shared by OAT and partner organizations

4) Primary project partners are Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Polk SWCD, Benton SWCD, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, and Willamette Partnership, particularly the Oak Accord.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application describes strategies for engaging landowners to build interest in conservation easements that will contribute to preserving the Willamette Valley's native oak habitats located on agricultural lands. Ninety percent of the Willamette Valley is privately owned lands; recovering native species that rely on oak will require working on private lands. Species recovery plans typically prioritize protecting habitat over restoration and conservation easements are a tool for accomplishing this protection.
- There is a clear path from the proposed landowner engagement to potential on-the-ground habitat protection projects.
- The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde is engaged in the project. Project actions and success measures include outreach to landowners about cultural access and securing cultural access agreements.
- The application includes clear quantifiable measures of success; for example, initiating the process for conservation easement conveyance on six properties in the Willamette Valley that are outside of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Region Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) areas in Lane and Linn counties.
- The proposed engagement strategically continues momentum initiated with previous outreach to bridge a gap in capacity leading to the upcoming RCPP, therefore building on past and future investments.
- The applicant has relevant experience for implementing the proposed landowner engagement and a track record implementing similar outreach in the Willamette region.
- Overall project cost is reasonable for the proposed engagement and expected outcomes.

Concerns

- Including a letter of support from NRCS that documents communications occurring between NRCS and the partnership developing through the RCPP would strengthen the application.
- Additional information describing the partnership with Benton SWCD and whether the proposed engagement may be leveraging the SWCDs grant to engage landowners with oak habitat would be helpful to better understand potentially overlapping investments. It is unclear whether these efforts will be coordinated to leverage existing conversations with landowners.
- Incorporating a summary describing progress made with the previous two engagement grants would be helpful to better understand how proposed outreach strategies are working in achieving success measures and what the outcomes were.

- Refreshment costs for meetings at $500 per event is unusually high compared to other projects.

Concluding Analysis

Most priority habitats in the Willamette Basin, including riparian, oak woodland, forest, wetland, and prairie, are located on private lands. Meaningful recovery of threatened and endangered species will rely on protection and restoration on private lands in addition to public lands. Conservation Easements provide a path to protect habitat first and establish locations for future restoration that builds further ecological uplift. The proposed engagement provides an opportunity to establish new options for agricultural landowners to participate in conservation and the applicant is strategically moving through the Willamette region to engage landowners on working lands to protect priority habitats.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 3

Review Team Recommended Amount

$93,100

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

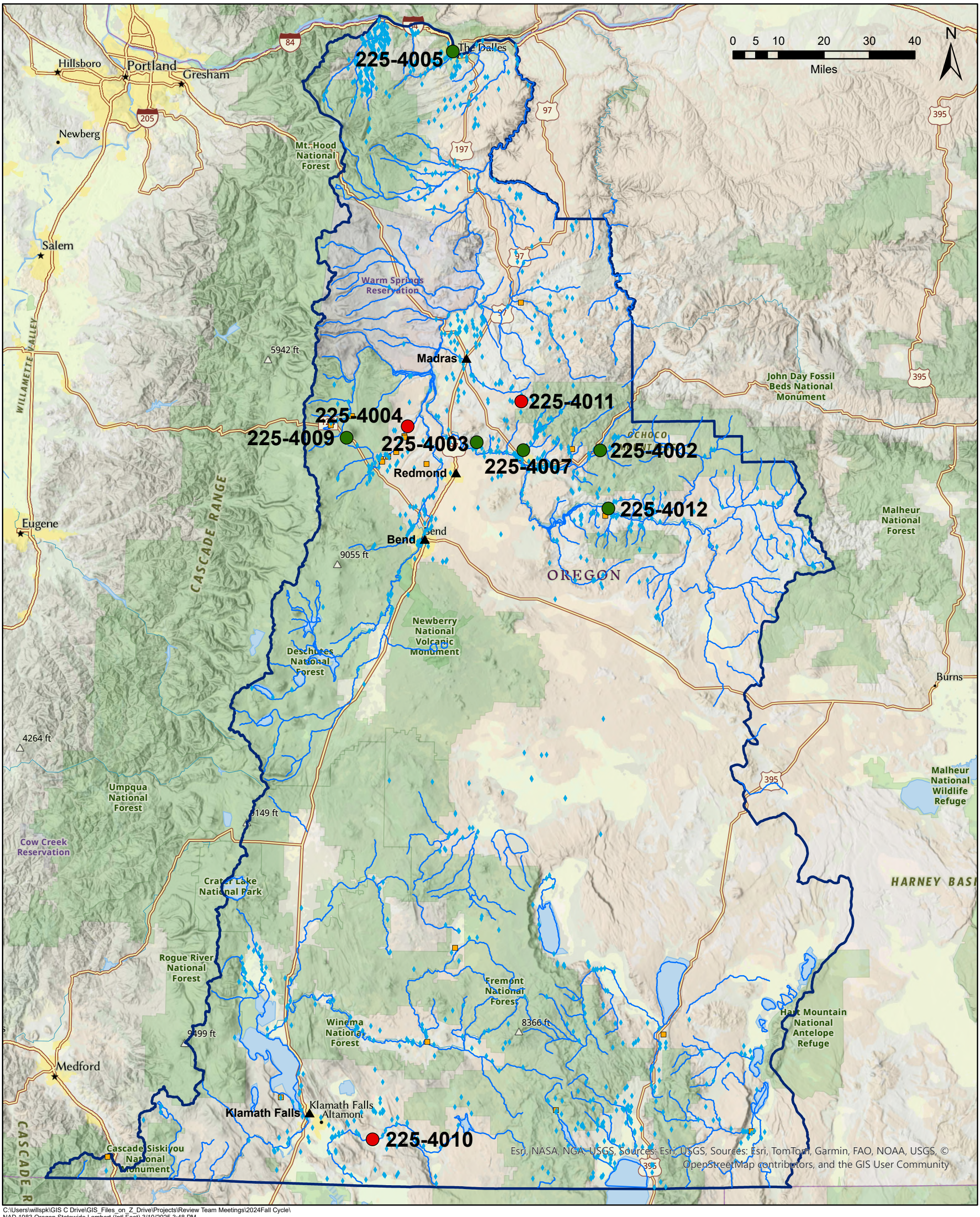
Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Central Oregon - Region 4 Fall 2024 Funding Recommendations



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Funding Recommendation

- Staff Recommendation For Funding (SRF)
- Below Funding Line (BFL)

Previous Grants 1998 - Spring 2024

- Land Acquisition
- Restoration
- Region 4 Cities
- Region 4 Streams
- OWEB Region 4 Boundary

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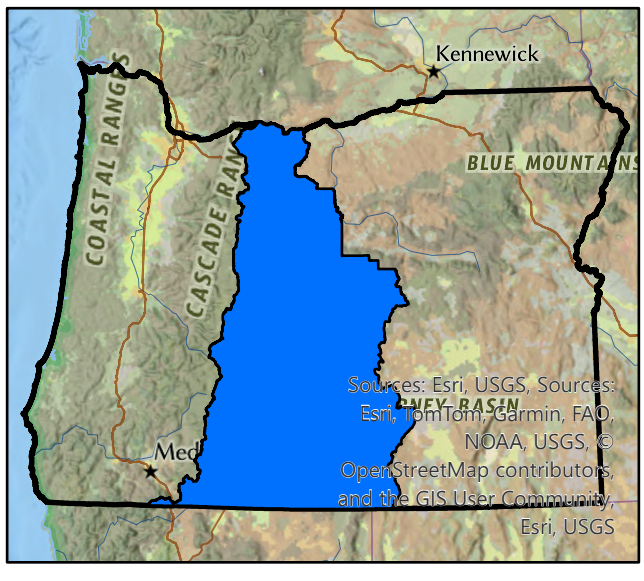


Region 4 - Central Oregon Restoration

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-4002	Crook SWCD	Fish Passage and Screening in the Upper Ochoco Creek Watershed: Phase 2	The goal of this project is to improve the quantity and quality of migratory fish populations in the Ochoco Creek watershed by increasing the availability of barrier-free streams. To do this, we will screen irrigation diversions and improve passage at 6 sites (6 diversions, 1 culvert) along 4 miles on Ochoco Creek.	$ 649,843
225-4003	Lone Pine Irrigation District	LPID Irrigation Modernization Project Phase 2-Year2	The goal of the project is to increase winter flows in the Deschutes River and improve the delivery reliability for agricultural production by piping the District's open canals. The project will protect 5.2 cfs of conserved water in the Deschutes River using the Allocation of Conserved Water Program and an agreement with North Unit Irrigation District, and will enhance agricultural production with more reliable water.	$ 498,070
Total Restoration Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 1,147,913**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
N/A				

Projects NOT RECOMMENDED for Funding by RRT

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
225-4001	Crooked River WC	Improving Wildlife Migration and Habitat on Foley Butte_CLONE	$ 292,468

Region 4 - Central Oregon Technical Assistance

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-4009	Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation	Bend to Suttle Lake Highway 20 Wildlife Crossing Design Development	The goal of the B2S Wildlife Passage Initiative is to construct wildlife crossing infrastructure on Highway 20 between Bend and Suttle Lake to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions, improve habitat connectivity, and increase wildlife adaptation to the effects of climate change for deer, elk, and other species.	$ 688,800
225-4007	Crooked River WC	Lower McKay Creek Restoration TA	The goal of this project is to develop completed set of engineered design plans in coordination with ODFW Fisheries Division staff hat will enhance the ecological functions of McKay Creek. In addition, the project will acquire all necessary in-water work permits and any studies or inventories required therein. The overarching goal is the creation of a shovel-ready project supported by key partners that can be utilize to seek implementation funding for 2026 implementation.	$ 124,467
225-4005	Wasco SWCD	Wasco County Area Watershed Councils Action Plan 2025	To update the Watershed Councils Action Plan using information learned from completing the updated watershed assessments within Wasco County to develop specific restoration actions, prioritize and identify restoration projects. The updated watershed action plan will identify restoration activities that will provide the greatest benefit to improving soil erosion, plant health and vigor, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian vegetation conditions, water quantity and quality, and upland habitats.	$ 74,098
Total Technical Assistance Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 887,365**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
225-4004	Upper Deschutes WC	Whychus Creek Stream Temperature Forecasting Phase 1: Model Development	The project aims to: 1) develop and test the accuracy of a real-time temperature forecasting model that predicts future temperature exceedances, and 2) will estimate the flow volumes necessary to offset forecasted temperature exceedances. Following successful completion of model development, the resulting model and calculated flow needs can be used to develop specific strategies and actions to meet the DBHCP 20°C stream temperature target at River Mile 6 on Whychus Creek.	$ 121,088
225-4011	Jefferson SWCD	Upper Willow Creek Habitat Enhancement	The goal is to develop a design plan and prepare for the implementation stage of restoring over a 2-mile stretch of Willow Creek. This project will restore habitat functions of the highly degraded stream channel and associated riparian area while preventing direct impacts from cattle.	$ 121,452
225-4010	Klamath Watershed Partnership	Bengard Ranch In-Stream Restoration Feasibility	Our goal is to create a plan, develop a design, and begin permitting over the year following award in the Lost River at Bengard Ranch to improve water attenuation and to reduce channelization to help reconnect surface to groundwater, reduce the need to irrigate, create fish habitat, and improve water quality outcomes.	$ 129,722

***Projects NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT**

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
225-4006	Pheasants Forever Inc	Lake County Meadow Resilience Restoration Field Guide	$ 91,714
225-4008	Crooked River WC	LCR Cultural Resources Survey - Phase I of Sigman Ranch	$ 42,350

Region 4 - Central Oregon Engagement

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-4012	The Xerces Society	Expanding Conservation of Mussels in Aquatic Restoration: Stakeholder Engagement	We will protect freshwater mussels from destruction during restoration projects to benefit mussels, salmon, other aquatic life, and people by engaging at least 200 stakeholders—biologists and restoration practitioners in Oregon— through presentations, workshops, and one-on-one discussions. We will cover the need to identify and protect mussels in restoration projects and how to survey for and avoid harm to mussel populations.	$ 147,572
Total Engagement Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 147,572**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
N/A				

***Projects NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT**

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
225-4013	Sustainable Northwest	Lost River Restoration Engagement	$ 87,252

Region 4 Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$2,182,850**
Region 1 - 6 Grand Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$13,355,571**

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4001-23952

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Improving Wildlife Migration and Habitat on Foley Butte_CLONE

Applicant: Crooked River WC

Region: Central Oregon

County: Crook

OWEB Request: $292,468

Total Cost: $366,782

Application Description 1. Foley Butte Ranch, located in the northwest corner of Crook County, Oregon, encompasses 30,000+ acres of timberland, creeks, meadows, and rugged mountain terrain. This property is known for its abundant wildlife species, including Mule deer, Rocky Mountain elk, cougars, Black bears, bobcats, coyotes, grouse, chukar, and native fish species in the abundant fish - bearing streams. Foley Butte Ranch is located within ODFW's Rocky Mountain elk winter/summer range and Mule deer winter range, making habitat restoration a priority.
2. The project area has suffered from past grazing management regimes that have allowed cattle to overgraze the riparian corridors along streams and overgraze the timber meadows on the north end of the property causing native woody vegetation to be nearly void along streams. Native grass stands aren't able to respond with regrowth due to intense grazing. Prior grazing management has also led to the encroachment of western juniper, and the decline of forbs, shrubs, and quaking aspen.
3. This application will address wildlife habitat degradation from prior grazing management practices by improving grazing distribution that will help reduce fire fuels and prevent overgrazing, significantly decrease cattle numbers (800 pairs down to 250 pairs), eliminate 2.26 miles of non-pasture hazardous fencing within the elk and deer winter range and summer ranges, install three miles of boundary fencing to protect critical habitat from neighboring cattle on forest allotment, and install spring developments that will increase clean water sources year-around for wildlife.
4. Project Partners include, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), The Crooked River Watershed Council (CRWC), Sustainable Northwest, and Foley Butte Ranch LLC.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by including an updated grazing management plan and additional detail for the Grazewell program.
- The application maps provide watershed context for understanding where the different project components would be implemented (i.e. fence locations, spring developments) relative to regional wildlife ranges.

- The proposed project will remove old barbed wire, non-wildlife friendly fencing, which poses risks and barriers to wildlife movement, while installing new pasture fencing with wildlife friendly fencing following NRCS specifications.
- The project is strongly supported by a host of local, state, and federal entities as evidenced by their letters of support attached to the application.
- The applicant staff and landowner team have demonstrated experience in implementing this type of work with success.

Concerns

- While the application details livestock grazing and management, it lacks evidence to support the project's wildlife benefits. Given the landowner's existing practices including livestock herd reduction, spring developments, range rider use, and Grazewell program enrollment, the project's value for wildlife habitat improvement is unclear. The application appears to prioritize landowner benefits related to livestock management over demonstrable enhancements to wildlife habitat.
- The project components are solely focused on improving livestock use and management. The watershed benefit to fish, wildlife, and water quality is difficult to quantify.
- It is unclear how data collected and analyzed from the Grazewell program will be used to inform future land management. Specifically, what monitoring thresholds will be established to guide future management, and what role does the landowner's lessee have in land management decisions. It is unclear how project partners will engage in utilizing the monitoring data to inform adaptive livestock grazing management.
- The application lacks discussion around the property's overall management goals and priorities. It is unclear whether pasture fencing is the highest priority to improve wildlife habitat, or whether there may be other actions that can be employed on the landscape that would have greater direct wildlife benefit, such as forest health, native plantings and seeding, and noxious weed removal.
- It is unclear whether the perimeter fence is a component appropriate for OWEB funding, or whether this should be an expense covered by the adjacent neighbor, a permitted grazing lessee on the Ochoco National Forest. The utility of this section of fence appears purely to keep lessee's livestock in and neighboring livestock out.

Concluding Analysis

While this project proposes using livestock grazing management to improve wildlife habitat, the application lacks sufficient evidence demonstrating that this approach will effectively benefit wildlife. It's unclear whether the proposed methods will improve habitat conditions or if alternative strategies might yield greater positive impacts for wildlife on the property.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4002-23961

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Fish Passage and Screening in the Upper Ochoco Creek Watershed: Phase 2

Applicant: Crook SWCD

Region: Central Oregon

County: Crook

OWEB Request: $649,843

Total Cost: $909,463

Application Description Our project area is upstream of the confluence of Ochoco and Marks Creeks in the Upper Ochoco Watershed. These streams exhibit rich ecological potential but past management and barriers to fish migration and survival have fettered their productivity. With proper fish passage and screening this lush valley can offer important spawning and rearing habitat for resident redband trout (a state and federal sensitive species), while continuing to provide excellent big game habitat and agricultural production. OWEB and other partners have invested significant funding to plan and implement fish passage projects that complement the current application. This project will add to that investment by providing passage at 7 additional barriers and providing access to habitat in Wolf Creek. This application seeks to secure funding to complete implementation of designs produced using OWEB TA funds. Crook SWCD has worked closely with our project partners to identify a unified approach to addressing watershed problems in the upper watershed. Through that process our team evaluated resources in order to identify which projects were best suited for restoration investment. In this phase of implementation project we will address fish passage at 7 sites (on 6 PODs), adding fish screens at 5 of those sites. This project is the next logical step in improving conditions for native migratory fish in the Upper Ochoco Watershed. It capitalizes on current momentum, previous investments, and willing landowners. This proposal is the result of a collaborative partnership between the Lookout Ranger District of the Ochoco National Forest, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Crooked River Watershed Council, Oregon Water Resources Department and Crook SWCD.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project is building on previous OWEB-funded technical assistance and phase I restoration and represents the next sequence of fish passage and screening needs posing threat to aquatic species movement in upper Ochoco Creek, most notably redband trout.
- The application includes letters of support from partners and the landowner demonstrating their commitment to implementing the project components.
- The budget is itemized offering a clear and detailed representation of all project components, their costs, and which passage structure they are applicable to.

- The application provides a detailed account for what was accomplished with phase I, documenting challenges and lessons learned that has led to a change in engineering firm to complete designs and acquire permits for phase II. This change in contracted expertise is appropriate and technically sound.

- The application provided a thorough design alternatives analysis for the fish screening component. The chosen alternative is technically sound, and the new engineering firm has vast expertise designing and installing fish screens.

Concerns

- The application lacks specific details for each passage structure and diversion in need of screening. Specifically, detail regarding existing barrier type, size, and diversion type would help justify the proposed solutions for each passage structure and screen type. This detail was captured during the technical assistance effort but left out of this application.

- The application lacks descriptions of local hydrologic conditions and water right information for each structure and associated diversion to add context and justification for the proposed passage solution and screen type. This detail would add clarity to ensure the proposed solutions are site appropriate.

Concluding Analysis

This restoration project will continue to expand fish passage and screening solutions on Ochoco Creek upstream of Ochoco Reservoir. This well supported project is building on past success and working sequentially with private landowners to restore passage and install fish screens. Upper Ochoco Creek is a cold water refugia and a stronghold for resident redband trout.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 2

Review Team Recommended Amount

$649,843

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$649,843

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4003-24052
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: LPID Irrigation Modernization Project Phase 2-Year2
Applicant: Lone Pine Irrigation District
Region: Central Oregon
County: Crook
OWEB Request: $498,070
Total Cost: $4,015,118

Application Description The Lone Pine Irrigation District Irrigation Modernization Project Phase 2 is located primarily in Crook County with a small footprint in Jefferson County. The approximate center of the project is: 44.37071691437451, -121.07798659440036.

Lone Pine Irrigation District (LPID) has been developing this project since 2018 with numerous partners to improve water quantity and water quality in the Deschutes and Crooked Rivers. The entire project will reduce seepage and evaporation from the irrigation system by 5.2 cubic feet per second (cfs), conserve that water in the Deschutes River during the winter through an agreement with North Unit Irrigation District, reduce spills into the Crooked River to improve water quality, and improve the reliability of the system for agricultural production.

Building on initial progress made in Phase 1, Phase 2 will be constructed over two years: Year 1 (winter of 2024-2025) and Year 2 (winter of 2025-2026). In Year 1, the District will install 5,190 ft of mainline HDPE pipe and 14,390 ft of lateral HDPE pipe. In Year 2, the District will install 7,430 ft of mainline HDPE pipe, 9,260 ft of lateral HDPE pipe, and a critical bridge over the Crooked River. The project also includes other components including turnouts, meters, and valves.
The District has an existing OWEB grant #223-4023 which will support Year 1 activities. This application is for the Year 2 scope of work.

Project partners include Black Rock Consulting (lead engineer), Taylor NW (selected contractor), Deschutes Basin Board of Control, Deschutes River Conservancy, Natural Resources Conservation Service (lead agency for a Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment and federal funding), Oregon Water Resources Department (grant), Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (existing grant), Department of Environmental Quality Clean Water State Revolving Fund (loan), and Farmers Conservation Alliance (technical assistance).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application articulated a clear need for this project. It is a high priority for restoring streamflow in the Upper Deschutes River and will help address critical habitat needs for listed species, especially the Oregon spotted frog.
- The project builds on previous OWEB restoration investment supporting the applicant's goal to pipe the entirety of the district's owned and managed irrigation canals.
- The applicant has the demonstrated experience and capacity to implement this large-scale project.
- This application will leverage committed funding partners, including Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD), to ensure the successful completion of the project's final phase.
- The budget includes a contingency line item for construction costs which demonstrates a smart outlook given the reality of volatile costs associated with constructing these types of projects.

Concerns

- The application lacks a description of the current tailwater returns to the Crooked River that this project will address. It would have been helpful to understand the water quality and quantity benefits that will be realized once the system is fully piped and tailwater into the Crooked River is no longer occurring.

Concluding Analysis

This project will continue irrigation piping along canals owned and operated by the Lone Pine Irrigation District. This phase is the final phase that will fully pipe the districts open canal's and will return in total 5.2 cfs to the Deschutes River (this phase will return 1.5 cfs of restored streamflow).

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 2

Review Team Recommended Amount

$498,070

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$498,070

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4004-23941

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2

Project Name: Whychus Creek Stream Temperature Forecasting Phase 1: Model Development

Applicant: Upper Deschutes WC

Region: Central Oregon

County: Jefferson

OWEB Request: $121,088

Total Cost: $138,308

Application Description This project is located on Whychus Creek, a tributary of the Deschutes River in central Oregon and a critical waterway for salmonid recovery in the Deschutes Basin, where stream temperatures regularly exceed thresholds for native fish species, including Chinook salmon, steelhead, redband trout, and mountain whitefish. The project supports the need to address stream temperature targets set by the Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (DBHCP), which will require stream temperatures at River Mile 6 to stay below 20°C to support fish recovery efforts.

The proposed work builds on two decades of effort in the Whychus Creek watershed and includes the development and testing of a real-time temperature forecasting system that will predict temperature above 20°C one to seven days in advance. The system will use predictor variables such as real-time stream discharge and instream temperature, air temperature, and other climatic factors. This first phase of development and testing will inform future phases that will address how this system could be integrated into decision making by the Three Sisters Irrigation District (TSID) and partners including Deschutes River Conservancy (DRC) to improve water management, water use, and instream flow. The intention is to build a forecasting tool that can be used in the future to optimize water delivery and increase instream flows during critical periods, preventing harmful temperature exceedances.

Key project partners include the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council (UDWC), DRC, and TSID, all of whom have been actively engaged in streamflow restoration and habitat improvement efforts in Whychus Creek over two decades. UDWC will work with a consultant to develop and test the forecasting system and will work collaboratively with partners to refine the forecasting system and evaluate its effectiveness to inform how this system can be used in the future to reduce stream temperature and improve fish habitat in the face of climate change.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application articulates a clear need for this project by providing context and details associated with temperature reductions required by the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).

- The project is supported by the Deschutes River Conservancy (DRC) and Three Sisters Irrigation District (TSID). This is important since any future water management activities to reduce stream temperature will be implemented by TSID and DRC.
- The applicant staff and partners have demonstrated extensive experience in monitoring ecological conditions along Whychus Creek.
- The proposed model development will leverage experience and lessons learned from two existing similar models developed in Oregon. This will allow the applicant and partners a jump start on what has been working and pitfalls to avoid in developing a model for Whychus Creek.
- The applicant includes a reasonable project management budget which is based on experience generating consensus with contractors and partners to complete projects.

Concerns

- Utilizing only two locations for calibrating stream temperatures may limit data accuracy. This is of particular concern given the extensive channel and floodplain restoration efforts occurring between these locations. Increased wetted channel length and ongoing revegetation efforts could influence temperature dynamics and it is unclear how these changes will be accounted for as restoration and revegetation mature over time.
- It is unclear how the previous model development for projects on 15 Mile Creek and the Middle Fork John Day River will be applicable to this project. The applicant has engaged with personnel responsible for developing those models and it would have been helpful to describe how much can be extrapolated from these efforts, and how necessary alterations to the approach would affect the overall project budget.
- It is difficult to discern and evaluate cost effectiveness of contracted services. The workplan activities are briefly described and do not provide enough detail to determine if the costs are appropriate.
- The application did not include a period of record for data intended to be used to inform the model. This is necessary to evaluate the viability of the proposed model given the many factors that can have an impact on the final output used to forecast stream temperatures.

Concluding Analysis

This project will develop a model to forecast stream temperatures on Whychus Creek. This model is intended to be used to inform water managers and water users when stream temperatures will exceed targets set in the HCP. Similar models have been produced and used to inform water management actions. This project is the first step to inform how future water management could reduce stream temperature on Whychus Creek.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 6

Review Team Recommended Amount

$121,088

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4005-23947

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2

Project Name: Wasco County Area Watershed Councils Action Plan 2025

Applicant: Wasco SWCD

Region: Central Oregon

County: Wasco

OWEB Request: $74,098

Total Cost: $79,448

Application Description The proposed project location encompasses 5 watersheds in Wasco County: Mosier (49,659 acres), The Dalles (82,406 acres), Fifteenmile (236,689 acres), White River (350,199 acres), and the combined Bakeoven/Buck Hollow Watershed (224,915 acres). Combined, this amounts to a total of 943,686 acres to be included in the proposal to update the watershed councils action plan. This project is part of a two-phase process. The first phase of this project was to update the Watershed Assessments, which were completed in the Spring of 2023 with funding from ODA. The new assessments incorporate the most up-to-date information regarding the current state of the watersheds, which provides the foundation for developing restoration action plans for the five watersheds. This proposal will address the second phase of the project, which is to take the information from the updated assessments, and use that information to update the Action Plan which was originally completed in 2015. The Action Plan has been a critical tool in guiding restoration projects throughout Wasco County since its completion. However, the previous Action Plan was based off of the old assessments, and is now over 9 years old. The updated Action Plan will identify specific restoration actions, prioritize the actions, and lay out a road map for restoration and outreach activities over a five-year period. Through the prioritization of specific restoration actions and conceptual project development, the five watershed councils with the assistance from a natural resource focused consultant, will develop restoration projects that address the root causes of factors limiting watershed conditions. Developing prioritized restoration actions requires extensive collaboration. In addition to watershed council involvement, the project partners include County/City officials, DEQ, ODFW, OWRD, ODA, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, USFS, ODF, and NRCS.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The applicant addressed previous evaluation concerns by providing a list of projects developed from the 2015 action plan and whether projects have been implemented or are scheduled to be implemented.
- The proposed project builds on recently completed watershed assessments in 2023, which will inform restoration priorities throughout Wasco County.

- The consultant engaged to develop the action plan is the same consultant who conducted the recently completed 2023 assessments and assessments/action plan completed in 2015. The advantage of utilizing the same consultant offers continuity, local resource knowledge and expertise, and potential cost savings.
- The outcome of this action plan will identify and prioritize restoration projects throughout the County that will provide the five watershed councils a roadmap to move forward with strategic implementation.
- The applicant has a strong track record of working collaboratively with all five watershed council boards, landowners, and agency partners. There is high likelihood this effort will develop a meaningful action plan that will be utilized across the County.
- The budget detail provided for the consultant's time to develop each task was helpful in evaluating the project's cost effectiveness.
- The application highlights the need to update the current action plan, specifically considering recent environmental stressors that are impacting natural resources in the County, such as severe drought and wildfires.

Concerns

- It is unclear whether climate change forecasts and modeling will be incorporated into the project prioritization process. This is important to ensure projects are technically sound and resilient to a drier and warmer climate.
- The application did not provide benefits and outcomes realized from projects implemented since 2015. It is unclear how beneficial projects have been in improving native fish and wildlife habitat and water quality and quantity throughout the County's watersheds.

Concluding Analysis

This project will develop an action plan across Wasco County that each of the five watershed councils will use to identify and prioritize restoration projects. This action plan will be the road map that will drive the County's watershed enhancement efforts for the foreseeable future.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 6

Review Team Recommended Amount

$74,098

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$74,098

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4006-23964
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: Lake County Meadow Resilience Restoration Field Guide
Applicant: Pheasants Forever Inc
Region: Central Oregon
County: Lake
OWEB Request: $91,714
Total Cost: $100,714

Application Description 1) In the closed basin-watershed of Lake County, Oregon, there is an urgent need for coordinated wet meadow conservation. Lacking natural external water outlets– water accumulates in local lakes, wetlands, and aquifers. Enhancing mesic areas replenishes these water sources and promotes soil health, vital habitat, and productivity of working lands.
2) With effects from rising global temperatures and drought, wet meadow ecosystems and working lands throughout this closed-basin system are at stake. Stakeholder engagement efforts have yielded county-wide interest in restoring and maximizing the health and productivity of our wet meadows. Combined resource concerns and increasing landowner receptivity forefronts a need to maximize the capacity of conservation practitioners, as well as critically evaluate the priority areas and subsequent feasibility of implementing these efforts.
3) The objective of this effort is to compile a comprehensive document to guide Lake Co. meadow restoration efforts to assist conservation practitioners in planning and implementing watershed-scale projects on private lands. The end document will include field-ready stream classification mapping, prioritization plans and feasibility studies, ground-ready concept maps, conservation practice recommendations by site, and a detailed overview of compliance and permitting processes associated with the recommended treatments. A spatial data tool will be created and distributed. Providing this information to partners in a user-friendly package decreases planning and preparation time, lending to conservation projects hitting the ground faster and more efficiently – maintaining our momentum in capturing land-owner engagement.
4) Project partners include Lake County Umbrella Watershed Council (LCUWC), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Pheasants Forever (PF), Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV), Ducks Unlimited (DU), Lakeview Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Landowners.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The proposed project focuses on developing tools and resources to identify and prioritize areas suitable for low-tech process-based restoration actions. This is an appropriate first step in characterizing and assessing conditions to evaluate potential to implement these types of practices to benefit fish, wildlife, and water quality.

- The outcomes of this project will provide insight, data, and maps to private landowners describing opportunities to employ low-tech process-based restoration actions
- The applicant and partners are well positioned to lead this effort, given their experience, expertise, and knowledge of Lake County and low-tech process-based restoration activities.
- The selected drone model is appropriate to capture video and photo representation of successful meadow restoration projects for use in future landowner engagement.

Concerns

- The scale proposed for this project is the entirety of Lake County, a large geography spanning multiple land ownership types, land uses, and jurisdictions. A refined scale focusing on known high priority areas for restoration identified in the many assessments and action plans listed in the application would be more appropriate to determine whether the resulting wet meadow guide is likely to result in future restoration.
- The scale and resolution of imagery proposed for this project is coarse (e.g. 30-meter digital elevation model). Data collected at this coarse scale will not be detailed enough for landowners and partners to develop restoration projects. Examples of outputs collected at this scale would have been beneficial to understand their relevance in restoration planning.
- The application lacks clarity about how drone data will inform the proposed wet meadow guide. The application states that time-lapse video and photos will be used in project planning and also to provide success stories for implemented projects. It is unclear whether data resolution will be fine enough to facilitate restoration project development. Tools such as the use of normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI) may offer added detail and data critical in evaluating restoration potential. It is also unclear which projects will be used to document success stories.
- The application states that landowner engagement will include a detailed overview of compliance and permitting processes necessary for project implementation; however, it is unclear which compliance and permitting requirements will be addressed, and whether the applicant and partners are aware of all the required permits.
- It is unclear who will house, host, and maintain the online ArcGIS spatial data repository. Clarity around how this component will be managed over time is important in evaluating technical soundness regarding data access and management.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project will assess all of Lake County to develop a comprehensive guide for how to employ meadow habitat restoration utilizing low tech process-based restoration tools. This type of restoration action is currently being employed in Lake County and interest in expanding this work is growing. The Lake County landscape offers a lot of potential to employ this type of work; however, the applicant is encouraged to evaluate the project scope and scale and how it aligns with current restoration

priorities and funding programs.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4007-23969
Project Name: Lower McKay Creek Restoration TA
Applicant: Crooked River WC
Region: Central Oregon
OWEB Request: $124,467

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Crook
Total Cost: $130,717

Application Description 1) This proposed project is located in Mckay Creek, within the Lower McKay Creek Watershed (HUC 12 - 170703050503), four miles northwest of Prineville, Oregon.

2) McKay creek, a main tributary to the Crooked River, is listed as an ESH (essential Salmonid Habitat) stream that was historically critical spawning ground for Steelhead and Chinook salmon. This stream system has been degraded by legacy agricultural practices and urban expansion of the community of Prineville, Oregon. McKay creek lacks sinuosity throughout this reach, the floodplain has been disconnected, and the riparian corridor lacks native plant diversity and canopy height.

3) The proposed work includes re-meandering the channel to the historic channel location to alleviate scouring that has led to head cut banks. Large wood structures will be used to sort and reduce sediment delivery, develop and maintain scour pools, and provide fish habitat (cover and refuge). Alcove habitat will be created and improved and river bar habitat areas will be enhanced to provide long term stability for fish and wildlife benefits. Revegetating key areas and in association with large wood structure locations will provide additional bank stability, shading to reduce stream temperature, and long-term detritus to the aquatic system

4) Project partners include, the Crooked River watershed council, the landowners, and Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application is timely and describes a clear need for the proposed project given its proximity to on-going restoration downstream, focus on a perennial reach of McKay Creek, and the green light given to the long-awaited McKay switch project that will restore streamflow to McKay Creek.
- McKay Creek is designated critical habitat for Mid-Columbia Steelhead; the proposed project offers high potential to restore instream, floodplain, and wetland conditions currently limiting fish suitability.
- The application is strongly supported by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the landowners, as evidenced by their letters of support included with the application.

- The applicant is well positioned to lead this effort, given their experience and expertise in implementing this type of work.
- The application included actions associated with wetland delineation, freshwater mussel surveys, and cultural resource surveys, which demonstrates their knowledge of permitting requirements and foresight in project planning.
- The project area does not have a livestock grazing program, and the landowner has expressed interest in enrolling in the CREP program, which will help ensure long-term viability of the restoration project.

Concerns

- The project partners identified for this project are limited to the applicant, ODFW, and landowners. Given the importance this project has for fish and wildlife, there may be opportunities to engage other partners that can offer critical insight and funding for this project.
- The timeline for this project is listed as starting in January 2025, which is pre-mature in utilizing funds available from OWEB. Funding awards made by the OWEB board will not be available until late April 2025.
- The application states that an RFP will be developed to hire a professional engineer, which is technically sound; however, the application also states a desire to use low tech process-based restoration actions. It is unclear whether additional technical services, such as biologists and geomorphologists will be required. These types of expertise may offer a wider range of restoration activities appropriate to the site in addition to engineering services.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project will develop a restoration design plan that is fully permitted and will improve habitat conditions along a 0.55 mile reach of McKay Creek, a key tributary to the Crooked River that is designated critical habitat for mid-Columbia Steelhead.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 6

Review Team Recommended Amount

$124,467

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$124,467

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4008-23979
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: LCR Cultural Resources Survey - Phase I of Sigman Ranch
Applicant: Crooked River WC
Region: Central Oregon
County: Crook
OWEB Request: $42,350
Total Cost: $56,290

Application Description 1) Identify the project location - The location is on the Sigman Ranch associated with the McAllister slough relocation (section). It is in the lower Prineville Valley just west of the O'Neil cutoff road north to Hwy 26.
2) Briefly state the project need - This narrowly focused 'project' is constrained to a single need - the cultural resource survey, reporting, and findings to support USACOE permit issuance. This requirement is also new for OWEB-funded projects that apply federal funds in the grant agreement. The requested funds support an existing OWEB-funded project that is ready for implementation (designs complete, implementation funds secured, and permits nearly completed and only lacking the CR clearance). This particular expense was unknown and thus not requested in the awarded OWEB grant for this project (OWEB #222-8200-20113; Lower Crooked River Strategic Habitat Restoration - Phase I - Sigman Ranch).
3) Describe the proposed work - The council will contract with a regional firm specializing in cultural resource management including all survey and reporting needs aligned with current requirements for this permit element.
4) Identify project partners - The private landowner, Bill and Karen Sigman, USDA NRCS (design funder), Crook County SWCD, and RSI as the project engineer.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application will focus on completing cultural resource surveys, which is the necessary next step in achieving environmental compliance for a restoration project on Sigman Ranch along the Lower Crooked River.
- The restoration project developed on Sigman Ranch has already received implementation funding from OWEB through the Deschutes Basin Partnership Focused Investment Program (FIP).
- The restoration project is identified in local, state, and federal recovery plans for mid-Columbia Steelhead.

Concerns

- The application briefly describes the planned restoration project but does not provide enough detail to evaluate stated benefits to fish, wildlife, and water quality. Additional detail articulating and quantifying the proposed ecological benefits is needed to discern technical soundness and watershed benefit. The location of this project is heavily influenced by agriculture. The RCPP program that funded the design did not engage regional partners outside of the applicant, landowners, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).

- It is understood that cultural resource surveys are holding up the permit issued by the Army Corps of Engineers; however, other necessary permits to carry out the restoration project are not secured, such as Department of State Lands (DSL) and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The application did not describe the pathway and timeline to secure other required permits.

- It is unclear why the cultural resource survey approach will only include pedestrian surveys. For a project proposing extensive earth work and ground disturbance, subsurface testing could be beneficial in evaluating cultural resource potential. The application did not provide detail and justification for proposing a pedestrian survey only.

- The application did not include a map outlining the area of potential effects (APE). Without this, it's difficult to discern whether the proposed funding amount is appropriate and adequate to complete surveys as proposed.

- It is unclear whether the budget to complete the survey is appropriate. The application lacks supporting documentation, such as bids or a detailed scope of work.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project will retain consulting services to complete cultural resource surveys for a planned restoration project on the Sigman Ranch along the Lower Crooked River downstream from the City of Prineville. This is an appropriate and eligible project activity; however, not enough detail was provided to determine whether this project will be lead to successful habitat restoration.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4009-24006
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: Bend to Suttle Lake Highway 20 Wildlife Crossing Design Development
Applicant: Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation
Region: Central Oregon
County: Deschutes
OWEB Request: $688,800
Total Cost: $868,800

Application Description The Oregon Wildlife Foundation, on behalf of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), requests funding to support construction of four wildlife overcrossings near Black Butte on Highway 20, between MP markers 90 and 95 in Deschutes and Jefferson Counties.

In Central Oregon, mule deer and elk must move to survive. Highway 20, between Bend and Suttle Lake, intersects several important movement corridors for mule deer, elk, and other wildlife. Like dams, roads act as barriers blocking the migration and movement that terrestrial wildlife need.

Each year, ODOT documents between 350 and 600 wildlife-vehicle strikes through collection and disposal of mule deer and elk carcasses in this section of highway 20. Without action to mitigate its impact, highway 20 will become a permanent barrier to terrestrial wildlife movement in central Oregon.

Like fish ladders, wildlife passage structures are a proven tool for mitigating the impacts of roads on terrestrial wildlife movement. In their first two years, the Crawford Road and Lava Butte wildlife underpasses on Highway 97 reduced wildlife-vehicle collisions by 90% within the fenced areas.

The Bend to Suttle Lake project will complete design and engineering for four overcrossings and associated features along Highway 20 on USFS land. This project will reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions; increasing motorist safety and reconnecting habitat for mule deer, elk, and many other species inhabiting the Deschutes basin.

ODOT is the lead for design and engineering. The total funds raised will be used, in partnership with other state and federal agencies, to complete geotechnical assessment, roadway design, environmental surveys, and permitting. This project is supported by a robust coalition of more than 18 partner organizations, including federal and state agencies, non-profits, landowners, tribal partners, and a university.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous evaluation concerns are addressed by including Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) collared data points of mule deer and elk, as well as providing an itemized budget per task.
- The proposed project builds on a completed alternatives analysis that explored a variety of potential wildlife crossings based on wildlife-vehicle collision data, land ownership, and habitat quantity and animal use. The chosen wildlife crossing locations, of which this project will fully design four, will maximize these criteria to provide the best possible alternatives to provide safe passage for wildlife crossing highway 20.
- The applicant staff, coalition partners, and consultant team have demonstrated experience in successfully implementing this type of work.
- A diversity of partners support the project, which is demonstrated by letters of support from the Warm Springs Tribe and state and federal agencies.
- The application included detailed maps, data, and graphs that document the severity of vehicle-wildlife conflicts.
- The applicant and partners that make up the coalition have the demonstrated experience and capacity to implement this large-scale project.
- The coalition utilized effectiveness monitoring data collected from wildlife crossings on highway 97 south of Bend that is aiding in the planning and design process when determining what the best structure type and associated features should be to maximize safe passage for wildlife.
- The project costs are expensive due to the nature of engineering four over-the-highway crossings along highway 20; however, these costs are commensurate with the ecological benefit in providing safe passage for wildlife species along the most lethal stretch of highway in Oregon. This project will also leverage millions of dollars in federal funding that is necessary to complete the project design.
- The application states this project lies entirely within ODFW's mapped big game winter range habitat overlay and considers all habitats within the winter range to be essential given they provide the necessary function for these animals to live from December through April.

Concerns

- No concerns were raised.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project will fully develop engineered designs and secure permits to support wildlife crossings across highway 20 between the City of Bend and Suttle Lake. This corridor has the highest number of deer/elk-vehicle collisions in the State of Oregon, thus is a high priority for Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 6

Review Team Recommended Amount

$688,800

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$688,800

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4010-24016
Project Name: Bengard Ranch In-Stream Restoration Feasibility
Applicant: Klamath Watershed Partnership
Region: Central Oregon
OWEB Request: $129,722

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Klamath
Total Cost: $147,211

Application Description The project is an in-stream project located on the Bengard Lost River Ranch in Poe Valley, Klamath County, Oregon. Bengard Ranch is the largest riverfront landowner on the Lost River in the Poe Valley area of the Lost River watershed. This project would cover approximately 3 miles of the Lost River. The Lost River is a highly modified 60-mile long system with headwaters at Clear Lake and terminates at the Tulelake Wildlife Refuge. A series of Bureau of Reclamation built improved channels up-and-down the system in the mid-1900s were created to provide flood control. However, today, demands on the system, this infrastructure, and the infrastructure's continual decline into disrepair have degraded the ecosystem and left landowners and stakeholders frustrated. The Lost River's channelization results in reduced return flows, reduced groundwater recharge, increased irrigation demands, reduced resiliency to drought and wildlife, poor habitat for fish and wildlife species, and it may contribute to poor water quality.
Our goal is to improve hydrologic, ecological, and agricultural resilience by addressing channelization and its associated impairments. The project is to create a restoration design and plan to perform in-stream restoration. This will increase hydraulic head upstream, which can help with sediment control, floodplain reconnection, and in-stream habitat creation. It can also help maintain connections between the water table and wetland vegetation. Ultimately we seek to reduce channelization and thereby slow the flow of water, reconnect groundwater, reduce the need to irrigate, improve fish and wildlife habitat, and pilot the process to demonstrate nature-based solutions and guide future projects on the Lost River. Bengard Ranch, Willamette Partnership, Klamath Watershed Partnership, Ducks Unlimited, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service Partners Program are committed to seeing the project through.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application described a clear need for technical assistance. The project area has been highly modified from its natural state to support agriculture. This technical assistance will characterize existing hydrological and ecological conditions, along with current irrigation use and water management necessary to support restoration design planning.

- The project area spans three river miles and is working with an enthusiastic landowner who has participated in conservation programs. Given the large focal area and support, this project has potential for ecological uplift.

- The application is strongly supported by partners and the landowner, as evidenced by their letters of support attached to the application.
- The applicant and partners are well positioned to lead this effort, given their experience and expertise implementing similar type projects.
- This project is being proposed as a pilot for restoration potential on working lands along the Lost River.
- The applicant and partners are part of the Lost River Working Group, an assemblage of local, state, and federal partners working collaboratively to address key limiting factors affecting fish and wildlife habitat and water quality and quantity. Lessons learned from this project, and others along the Lost River, are captured and incorporated into the working groups focus for restoration of the Lost River watershed.

Concerns

- The application lacks details on existing conditions at the project site. For example, it is difficult to understand which channels are natural vs. artificial for irrigation conveyance. It is difficult to understand water management across the project area (e.g. locations of irrigation points of diversion). The application lacks details on watershed context for this project, including relevance to irrigation water rights, Lost River seasonal flows, and fish and wildlife use.
- The application lacks additional maps and photos articulating both the project area and its context within the greater Lost River watershed. Two photos were attached to the application, but it wasn't clear where on the map those photos were taken from. Additional maps and photos can provide insight into the hydrologic setting, critical habitat designations for fish and wildlife, and water quality parameters.
- The application mentioned the investigation into utilizing rock weirs as a restoration solution. Rock weirs are not natural solutions, can pose issues with fish passage, can be challenging to permit, and can have limited affect on improving instream complexity. It is unclear why this restoration action was specifically called out, and whether these features are appropriate to achieve ecological uplift.
- The actions outlined in the application are light on details regarding design development and review. It is unclear what this process will entail at each design interval, who will be responsible for these tasks, and how the design team will evaluate restoration concepts to carry forward.
- It is difficult to understand the project's potential ecological uplift. The application did not provide enough details on fish and wildlife use and water quality parameters that the project seeks to improve. Without this information, it's difficult to evaluate technical soundness in addressing limiting factors for fish and wildlife and water quality improvement.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project will characterize natural resources and develop restoration designs on a private ranch spanning three miles along the Lost River in Poe Valley. This section of the Lost River is highly degraded and could benefit from conservation practices. The application lacks site specific details and contextual information necessary to evaluate fish and wildlife habitat and water quality improvement potential.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

6 of 6

Review Team Recommended Amount

$129,722

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4011-24056
Project Name: Upper Willow Creek Habitat Enhancement
Applicant: Jefferson SWCD
Region: Central Oregon
OWEB Request: $121,452

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Jefferson
Total Cost: $127,851

Application Description 1. Willow Creek Watershed includes Willow Creek and two other small drainage areas in Jefferson County, Oregon. The total Willow Creek watershed area encompasses 176,777 acres, of which 115,758 acres are drained by Willow Creek. From its headwaters in the Ochoco Mountains, Willow Creek flows 26 miles northwest, eventually entering Lake Simtustus, an impoundment on the Deschutes River.
2. Since the European-American settlement of the area in the late 1800s, riparian and upland area quality in this region of Oregon has greatly declined. Historically, the riparian areas had significantly more woody vegetation than is currently present due largely to grazing, logging, and agricultural pressures. The woody vegetation has been replaced by non-native grasses, agricultural fields, or non-native herbaceous vegetation that lacks the root stability of the former communities. After the flood of 1964, Willow Creek was channelized by the Army Corp of Engineers in an effort to better control flooding. Berms were created on each side of the stream to contain the high flows. Over time, the stream channel has become deeply incised in places, and the berms have washed out causing severe erosion in places. In addition, these actions and resulting degradation has caused impacts to fish and wildlife, water quality, riparian vegetation, and overall watershed health.
3. This project seeks to improve riparian conditions, promote beaver reintroduction, re-meander the creek, exclude cattle, fix bank erosion and incision, increase fish habitat, replace two culverts and raise the surface water elevations.
4. Project partners include Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District (Jefferson SWCD), Middle Deschutes Watershed Council (MDWC) and the three landowners this project encompasses. Jefferson SWCD and MDWC will utilize the project planning phase with this TA to garner support and partner with additional organizations.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application describes a clear need for technical assistance. The project area spans three different landowners, includes two undersized culverts, and will require contracted expertise to carry out the scope of work.

- The project area presents opportunities to benefit fish and wildlife habitat and water quality. The proposed use of low-tech process-based actions is appropriate for the area and beavers are present in the project reach. The project area is adjacent to public lands and provides connectivity and habitat for wildlife.

- The applicant is well positioned to lead this effort, given their experience and expertise in implementing this type of work. The landowners involved are engaged and supportive of this work as evidenced by their letters of support.

- The application includes actions associated with wetland delineation, cultural resource surveys, and other costs associated with permitting which demonstrates their knowledge of permitting requirements and foresight in project planning.

- The applicant and partners will be able to access newly acquired LiDAR imagery for the area which is an essential data set in determining existing conditions and restoration potential.

Concerns

- The project partners identified in the scope of this project are limited to the applicant and landowners. It is unclear how partners who provided letters of support will be engaged (e.g. OSU, Ochoco National Forest, and DEQ).

- The design development is listed in the budget as one lump sum. Without additional details and an itemized budget for contractor tasks, it is difficult to evaluate whether costs are reasonable, necessary, and adequate.

- It is unclear what the budget item “capacity support” will pay for. There is no description or justification in the budget narrative describing what this entails. It is also unclear why there is a budget line item for a scientific take permit for fish rescue salvage. The application did not describe why this is required during design development.

- The application states that an RFP will be developed to hire a professional engineer, which is technically sound; however, the application also states a desire to use low tech process-based restoration actions. It is unclear whether additional technical services, such as biologists and geomorphologists will be required. These types of expertise may offer a wider range of restoration activities appropriate to the site in addition to engineering services.

- The actions outlined in the application are light on details regarding design development and review. It is unclear what this process will entail at each design interval, who will be responsible for these tasks, and how the design team will evaluate restoration concepts to carry forward.

Concluding Analysis

This project will develop a restoration design plan that will restore habitat on over two miles of Upper Willow Creek in rural Jefferson County. There is potential for this project to serve as a pilot for

restoration potential that other landowners can see and learn from.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

5 of 6

Review Team Recommended Amount

$121,452

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$121,452

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4012-23955
Project Name: Expanding Conservation of Mussels in Aquatic Restoration: Stakeholder Engagement
Applicant: The Xerces Society
Region: Central Oregon
OWEB Request: $147,572

Project Type: Engagement_v2
County: Crook
Total Cost: $155,339

Application Description Freshwater mussels provide key support to Oregon's freshwater quality and biodiversity, including native salmonids. While mussel awareness is increasing, many restoration practitioners still lack the understanding or expertise to effectively survey for and conserve mussel populations during construction and restoration activities. Freshwater mussels are sensitive to disturbance, including from habitat or construction projects, as well as salvages, which is concerning as many of Oregon's native mussel species face extinction. As such, aquatic habitat restoration poses a significant emerging threat to mussels. These cryptic animals are often discovered by restoration practitioners only when sites are dewatered, or the abundance of mussels is dramatically underestimated, at which point, their chance of survival is limited. When mussel beds are lost, it can take decades to restore this resource, and the ecological condition of an otherwise restored site devoid of mussels may be poorer than the site was prior to restoration.

We will engage 200+ biologists, land managers, and restoration practitioners statewide in learning about how to protect mussels during restoration projects. We will reach people through presentations, day-long workshops, and site visits, building off of the success of our previous OWEB engagement grant (OWEB 219-4030-16647). We will provide information on surveying for mussels, utilizing a newly-developed (2024) resource, the Visual Survey Protocol Framework for Western North American Freshwater Mussels, and implementing best management practices during restoration planning, using the document Conserving the Gems of Our Waters (completed in part under OWEB Grant No. 214-3072-11006).

Areas with interested partners will be prioritized, particularly those working within the range of Oregon's most imperiled mussel species, the western ridged mussel (Gonidea angulata), which is being considered for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The applicant is engaging the right suite of partners statewide to protect and conserve freshwater mussels, specifically restoration specialists comprised of NGO, tribal, state, and federal practitioners.

- Freshwater mussels are an increasingly important aquatic species, sometimes overlooked in aquatic restoration planning. Th proposed engagement will offer tools and resources to aid in protecting and conserving these species during aquatic habitat restoration work.
- The proposed project is building on prior state-wide engagement and will continue with targeted presentations, day long workshops (half day classroom, half day field) and site visits to current and planned restoration sites.
- The Western ridge mussel is a candidate for federal endangered species listing, adding to the importance and timing for this engagement work.
- The proposed project has a high likelihood of success given the applicant's staff are experts in freshwater mussel biology and conservation and have experience with similar engagement.
- The travel and training budget is high, but justified given the applicant will travel across the state to engage practitioners in the field.

Concerns

- The proposed match amounts are unclear. The amount listed on the budget page is different than the match amount provided on the match from.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project will engage restoration practitioners statewide to provide technical guidance and resources on freshwater mussels for awareness, conservation, and protection. Specially, the engagement will focus on providing tools to safeguard these species during aquatic restoration projects.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 1

Review Team Recommended Amount

$147,572

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$147,572

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 225-4013-24035
Project Name: Lost River Restoration Engagement
Applicant: Sustainable Northwest
Region: Central Oregon
OWEB Request: $87,252

Project Type: Engagement_v2
County: Klamath
Total Cost: $117,252

Application Description The Lost River watershed is located in the Klamath Basin in south central Oregon. Severe channelization of the river has disconnected it from its floodplain wetlands and groundwater table, which has led to increased sediment loading and temperature. This has resulted in lower dissolved oxygen levels and poor water quality, causing DEQ to declare the Lost River to be an "impaired" waterway. With continued climate change-induced drought and disassociation from historical wetlands, these issues will continue to worsen, and could contribute to the possible extinction of the ESA-listed Lost River Sucker Fish, which are native to the river.

This project work will share information about Lost River restoration opportunities with landowners/managers through workshops and individual meetings to identify a pipeline of restoration projects. This project information will be used to help inform future funding opportunities for the Lost River, such as an NRCS RCPP. Potential RCPP projects include Juniper removal and spring restoration, wetland restoration and irrigation efficiency, riparian fencing and planting, and instream work to create a watershed-wide, climate resilient restoration strategy built upon landowner input. The identification of interest in these projects will come largely from this project. This project and an ensuing RCPP could form the basis for other, larger collaborative restoration efforts, such as an OWEB Focused Investment Partnership.

This project leverages the collaborative partnership of the Lost River Working Group (LRWG), facilitated by Willamette Partnership, that includes Klamath Watershed Partnership, Klamath SWCD, Tulelake and Klamath Falls United States Fish & Wildlife Partners Program, Modoc Nation, Klamath Tribes, Langell Valley and Horsefly Irrigation Districts, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and local landowners. SNW will be reporting directly to the LRWG about work generated from this engagement grant.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The Lost River basin represents an untapped geography for restoration, as it has been overshadowed by other priorities in Klamath County, notably the focus on the Upper Klamath Basin (upstream of Upper Klamath Lake).

- The applicant is an active member of the Lost River Working Group, which is quickly becoming a resource hub for landowners and agency partners to collaborate on conservation of the Lost River watershed. This project will build upon and leverage the expertise of entities collaborating in this working group.

- This project will help the Lost River Working Group to develop a strategic action plan (SAP) that aims to provide a roadmap for conservation of the Lost River watershed, specifically looking at projects spanning instream, riparian, wetland, and upland habitats as well as irrigation efficiency projects.

- This project is being modeled on similar work in the Sprague River watershed, which demonstrates how these proposed strategies of engagement could lead to future restoration.

Concerns

- It is not clear from the application what the deliverable will be from the proposed engagement that connects demonstrated interest from private landowners to eligible restoration projects. It is also not clear who the intended target audience is or where in the Lost River basin this engagement will be targeted, which is important since the river's headwaters are in California where OWEB funds cannot be applied.

- The application presented inaccuracies regarding technical information on Shortnose and Lost River sucker species distribution and critical habitat designation. The Lost River sucker does exist in other water bodies besides the Lost River as the application suggests (e.g. Upper Klamath Lake and Sprague River). Designated critical habitat for both Lost River and Shortnose sucker are primarily in headwater lakes and sections of the Lost River in California and creeks feeding into and releasing out of Gerber reservoir. The mainstem Lost River in Oregon is not designated critical habitat for these species as the application implies.

- It is challenging to discern the costs of engagement activities since the budget is described as staff time, rather than activities. Without this level of detail, it is unclear whether the project is cost effective.

- The role of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in this project is unclear. They are listed as providing $15,000 in match, but no letter of support was provided, nor are they listed in the project workplan table.

Concluding Analysis

This engagement project will work in the Lost River watershed to generate support for future restoration. The Lost River watershed suffers from centuries of human manipulation to support agriculture and ranching and has often been overlooked as a restoration priority. This project has the potential to leverage landowner interest to begin the process of raising awareness about the Lost River and opportunities to improve fish and wildlife habitat and water quality; however, as proposed the application lacks details and focus to achieve the goals presented.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

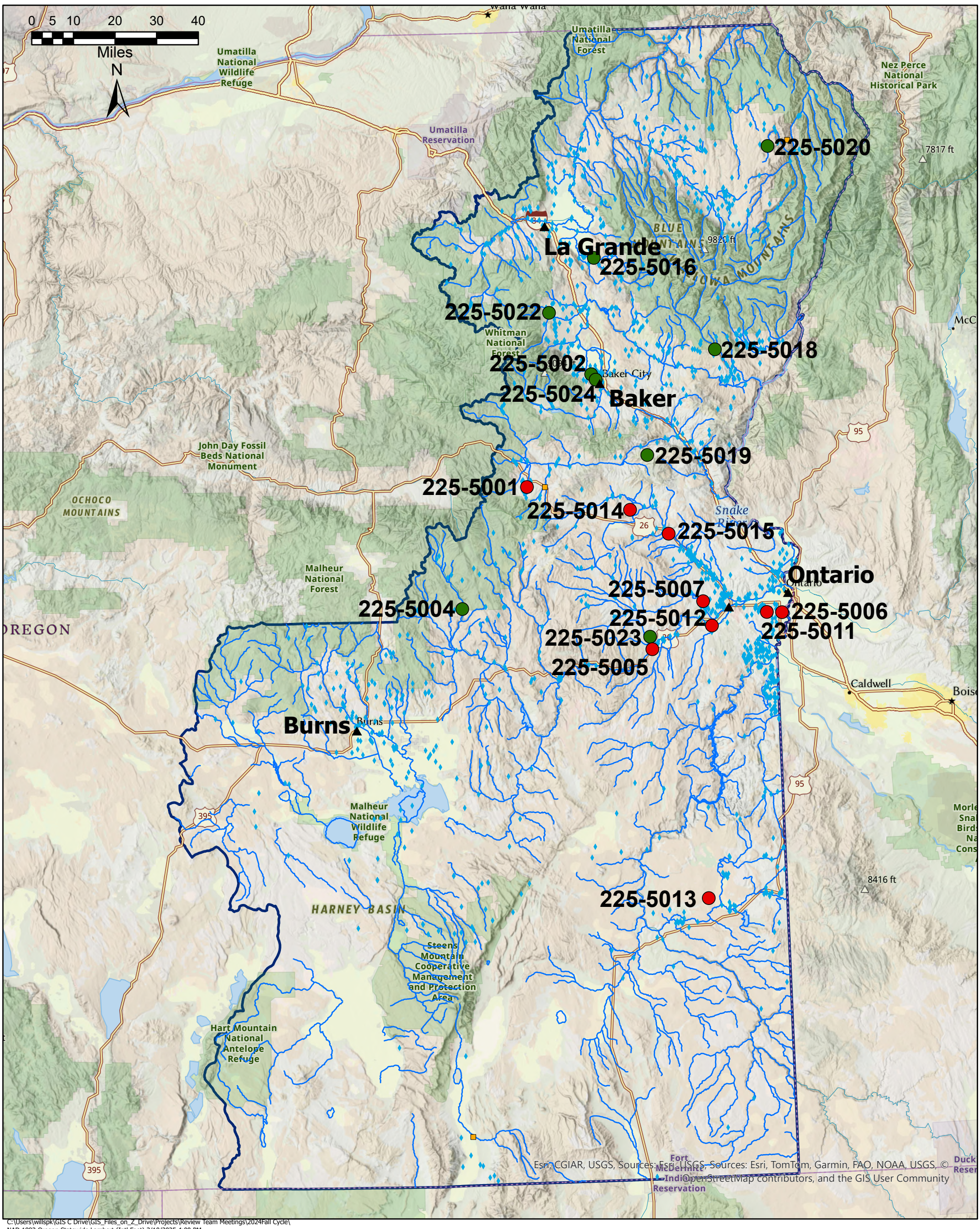
Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Eastern Oregon - Region 5 Fall 2024 Funding Recommendations



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Funding Recommendation

- Staff Recommendation For Funding (SRF)
- Below Funding Line (BFL)

Previous Grants 1998 - Spring 2024

- Land Acquisition
- Restoration
- Region 5 Cities
- Region 5 Streams
- OWEB Region 5 Boundary

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

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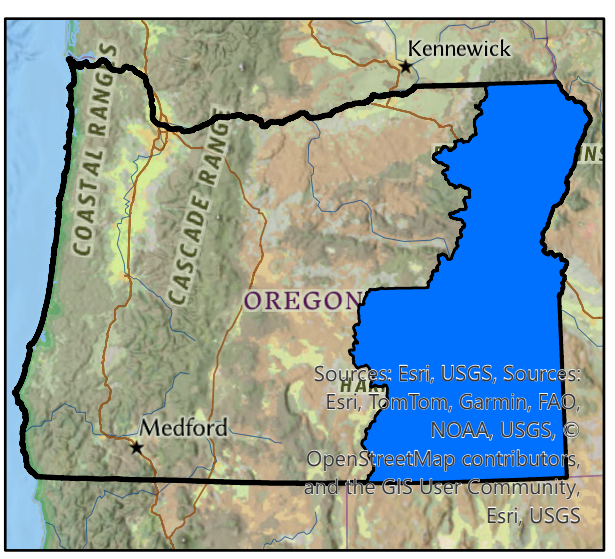

Region 5 - Eastern Oregon Restoration

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-5020	Trout Unlimited Inc	Phase 1: Camp Creek Wet Meadow and Aquatic Resiliency Project	The overall goal of the project is to re-establish a connected river-wetland corridor in a degraded meadow system, restore floodplain hydrology and function, enhance climate resilience, and encourage natural habitat forming processes for a biodiverse community of species. This meadow complex has the potential to support core habitat and corridors for species including bats, birds, elk, deer, cougar, bear, coyote, wolf, beaver, Columbia spotted frog and ESA-listed Snake River steelhead.	$ 458,970
225-5019	Tri-County CWMA	Post Fire Recovery and Restoration in Response to the Durkee and Thomspon Fire	Promote the recovery of native habitat after the disturbance of wildfire by controlling invasive noxious weeds.	$ 444,140
225-5016	Union SWCD	Little Creek Buffalo Flats Restoration	1) To restore aquatic habitat and increase salmonid habitat diversity and complexity; 2) Improve water temp and sediment; 3) Promote conditions to restore ecological function and soil health; 4) Improve riparian and floodplain vegetation diversity and function; 5) Reconnect the floodplain and expand quality floodplain habitat availability for salmonids; 6) Increase streambank and floodplain storage of water and ice, increase potential for attenuating flows and reducing ice formation in stream.	$ 380,385
225-5004	Malheur WC	Hog Wild Thinning Phase II_CLONE	Goals: Implementing Phase II will expand these goals to a wider area. 1) Enhance watershed resiliency to withstand wildfire and climate change. 2) Improve wildlife habitat by protecting and improving mahogany stands. 3) Control the invasion of juniper to benefit sage-grouse and other wildlife species. 4) Improve the riparian area function of a small ephemeral stream by removing invading juniper. a) Thin according to ODF riparian rules	$ 131,869
225-5002	Baker Valley SWCD	Pocahontas Irrigation Improvement	The goal of the Pocahontas Irrigation Improvement Project is to eliminate flood irrigation runoff, surface erosion, sedimentation, bacteria and nutrient input concerns at the site by converting 335 acres of seasonal pasture ground to farmed ground under sprinkler irrigation, as well as decommissioning many of the highly erodible earthen irrigation ditches throughout the property.	$ 498,136
225-5018	Tri-County CWMA	Post Fire Recovery and Restoration in Response to The Town Gulch and Coyote Fires	Promote the recovery of native habitat after the disturbance of wildfire.	$ 530,441
Total Restoration Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 2,443,941**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
225-5012	Malheur SWCD	Boon For The Malheur River	The goal of this project is to meet the allocation loads outlined in the Malheur River Basin Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan from January 2015, specifically section 2.3.5 on Basin TMDLs and Agricultural Load Allocations. By converting 114 acres from furrow irrigation to a zero-runoff system, we can significantly improve the watershed conditions in the Malheur River, reducing sediments, nutrients, and E. coli in the water.	$ 97,244
225-5005	Malheur WC	Three Times The Benefit Along The Malheur River Water Quality Improvement	Improve water quality in the mainstem Malheur River through the conversion of about 135 acres from flood irrigation to sprinkler irrigation.	$ 180,721
225-5001	Burnt River SWCD	Bull Run Creek Irrigation Improvement	To improve water use, irrigation efficiency and water quality conditions in the Burnt River Watershed by converting from flood to sprinkler on 113 acres at the project site, eliminating flood irrigation runoff, as well as eliminating the ongoing soil erosion, sedimentation and ditch loss by piping and/or decommissioning the open earthen irrigation ditches.	$ 282,834

225-5011	Malheur SWCD	HawkEye V2	The objective is to convert 83.2 acres of flood irrigation to sprinkler irrigation to eliminate the runoff of nutrients and E. coli into the Shoestring Canal, which eventually empties into the Malheur and the Snake River. By reducing flood irrigation to 12 acres, the runoff will be contained in three ponds. This conversion project is related to other OWEB conversion projects in the Morgan Bench Priority Area known by the SWCD and ODA, NRCS identifies this area as Valley View Priority Area.	$ 94,590
225-5013	Malheur SWCD	Fire Matters	Restore 446 acres of Low Density Sage Grouse Habitat in the Fire Matters project area through application of herbicide, rangeland seedings, cross fencing, and conservation management plans. Restoration of this upland sage steppe area will help to rehabilitate fire damage, and improve water quality, soil health, economic viability of the rangeland and Sage Grouse/wildlife habitat health.	$ 152,375
225-5007	Malheur WC	Just South of Bully Creek Reservoir Water Quality Improvement	The goal of this project is to improve water quality by eliminating the irrigation return flows from this property. The property drains between 2,600 and 3,600 ft away into Bully Creek. This means that Bully Creek, the Malheur River, and Snake River will be impacted by the installation of this system.	$ 123,840
225-5006	Owyhee WC	Plumb Bob Water Quality Improvement	The goal of the Plumb Bob Water Quality Improvement project is to convert 96 acres from flood to sprinkler irrigation and eliminate tailwater containing sediment, nutrients, and bacteria from flowing off the project site through the Plummer Slough then into the Snake River. Implementation of this project will address non-point source pollutants contributing to poor water quality, and improve fish/aquatic life and contact recreation beneficial uses in the Snake River.	$ 236,547
225-5014	Malheur WC	Rebuilding Core Sage Steppe Communities Post Wildfire	The restoration goal at all four properties is to leverage funding with FSA and private landowners to expedite the reconstruction and repair of rangeland fences. These rangeland fences are critical management structures which must first be in place to facilitate after fire vegetative recovery efforts. These vegetative recovery efforts are focused on decreasing the establishment of invasive annual grasses and noxious weeds within Core Sage Grouse PAC's and Conservation Opportunity Growth areas.	$ 205,870
225-5015	Malheur SWCD	Burnt Toast Phase 1	Phase 1 Rebuild 21.5 miles of boundary fence in the same footprint. This will allow control of livestock movement from private to BLM acres. Utilize herbicide treatment Thistle/White Top- 600 acres NRCS 25 acre for Medusahead For future control of wildfire 167 acres - 250 ft Firebreak along the highway NRCS Fire Break- 4 miles-500 ft wide (373 Acres) with Forage Kochia Fix 7 existing water troughs NRCS-2 new water developments Phase 2 Seeding Fence Spraying Water dev	$ 209,293

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
225-5003	Powder Basin WC	Keeping it Cold at Schneider Meadows	$ 235,091
225-5008	Owyhee WC	White Dog Water Quality Improvement Project	$ 105,426

225-5009	Owyhee WC	Hidden Oasis Water Quality Improvement Project	$ 157,335
225-5017	Malheur SWCD	Fire in the Wilkerness	$ 67,308
225-5021	Malheur WC	Gotta Suit Up and Deal With Suitter Creek	$ 223,065

Region 5 - Eastern Oregon Technical Assistance

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-5022	Powder Basin WC	Uplifting Anthony Creek For Native Trout and Beaver Phase II: Environmental Clearances	The goal of this Technical Assistance request to make the designed project ready for implementation in 2026 and 2027 by securing all needed permitting and environmental compliance including land use approval, removal-fill permitting, fish passage approval and cultural resource clearance.	$ 53,965
225-5023	Malheur WC	Some Blowouts Never Stop	Develop a feasibility analysis that provides a survey, standard designs, potential restoration techniques, yardages, and a budget for at least three alternatives. The selected alternative must be cost effective and give us reasonable assurance that an implemented project will improve: • Connectivity to the flood plain, • Maintain and improve riparian vegetation, • Reduce erosion • Moderate stream temperatures • Filter sediment and nutrients	$ 101,365
Total Technical Assistance Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 155,330**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
N/A				

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
N/A			

Region 5 - Eastern Oregon Engagement

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-5024	Powder Basin WC	Powder Basin Engagement Phase II	Engage private landowners, government agencies, and organizations in 4 focus areas to facilitate/develop projects to restore beaver populations in the watershed and associated improvements in aquatic/floodplain habitats, modernize irrigation systems to improve water quantity and quality, improve passage for native aquatic organisms, and improve aquatic habitat for Columbia Basin redband trout to improve watershed function and recreational fishing opportunities.	$ 131,720
Total Engagement Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 131,720**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
N/A				

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT			
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Amount Requested**
N/A			

Region 5 Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$2,730,991**

Region 1 - 6 Grand Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$13,355,571**

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5001-23908
Project Name: Bull Run Creek Irrigation Improvement
Applicant: Burnt River SWCD
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $282,834

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Baker
Total Cost: $408,489

Application Description Located within the Burnt River Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), near Unity Oregon, and in the Burnt River Strategic Implementation Area (SIA), the Bull Run Creek Irrigation Project will address inefficient irrigation practices on 113 acres of flood irrigated ground that is currently impacting water quality within the SIA and the overall Burnt River Watershed.
This property utilizes flood irrigation water diverted out of Bull Run Creek that must travel through an irrigation ditch to reach the property. From there, water is diverted into smaller ditches to move throughout the pasture. Increased flood irrigation runoff entering a fresh water system, in this case, Job Creek, which flows into the Burnt River, is linked to higher stream temperatures, pH, and dissolved oxygen, negatively impacting stream function and aquatic habitat.
The landowner has partnered with NRCS and the Burnt River SWCD to mitigate these watershed concerns; 6,220 feet of mainline will serve two pivots and handline, eliminating flood irrigation runoff at the site. Several of the irrigation ditches will no longer be used, eliminating the use of these highly-erodible open earthen ditches that are contributing to surface erosion, sedimentation and ditch loss.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The restoration methods are clearly defined and appropriate to address degraded water quality in the Burnt River Basin and the new irrigation system will conserve 113 acre-feet of water during the irrigation season.
- The maps uploaded with the application show that the project is within an Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Strategic Implementation Area (SIA) and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) conducts water quality monitoring in the area. The proposed water quality improvement actions address priorities for both agencies.
- Converting from flood to sprinkler irrigation will improve water quality and may increase quantity in the Burnt River, a priority stream for conservation in the Burnt River Valley.
- The irrigation conversion may be a catalyst for other conservation projects in the Burnt River SIA, which is an area where landowners have not implemented many conservation practices in the past.

- The landowner is actively improving on-farm practices, forest conditions in the uplands, and sage-grouse habitat on the ranch, indicating the irrigation system is likely to be implemented and maintained as proposed.
- The Burnt River SWCD has a proven track record of managing and completing projects as proposed and according to the project schedule.
- The overall project cost is reasonable for the expected watershed health benefits.

Concerns

- The project is in sage grouse habitat. Pivot irrigation systems provide perches for predatory birds that are known to predate on sage-grouse chicks and installing these systems can contribute to the decline of sage-grouse in Baker County.

Concluding Analysis

Converting 113 acres from flood to sprinkler irrigation in the Burnt River Valley will reduce water diverted for current crop production and improve water quality in the Burnt River. The proposed actions are likely to succeed in providing a watershed benefit because irrigation water management is a top conservation priority for the Burnt River Basin.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

9 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$282,834

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5002-23916
Project Name: Pocahontas Irrigation Improvement
Applicant: Baker Valley SWCD
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $498,136

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Baker
Total Cost: $867,280

Application Description Located in the Baker Valley Soil and Water Conservation District, and about two miles from Baker City, Oregon; the Pocahontas Irrigation Improvement Project aims to improve irrigation practices on 335 acres of flood irrigated ground.
Currently, the property is flood irrigating the pasture ground, via Steele Mill Ditch, through a series of open earthen ditches which are experiencing surface erosion, sedimentation and ditch loss. The large fields are uneven, leaving some areas over-saturated with flood water, and others receiving no water at all. Flood irrigation runoff leaves the uneven pasture ground and travels through a series of connected ditches that return to the Powder River, located only about three miles from the project site.
To prevent flood irrigation runoff from entering the Powder River Watershed and further impacting the Oregon DEQ 303 d listed stream, the Pocahontas Irrigation Improvement Project proposes to install two 7-tower pivots and one half circle 7-tower pivot to convert 335 acres of pasture to a more efficient sprinkler system. The sprinkler system will be fed by a bulge in the Steele Mill Ditch, complete with two floating pumps and two flow meters to serve the pivots. The landowner has partnered with a local irrigation company as well as the Baker Valley SWCD to mitigate the misuse of irrigation water and improve water quality as well as soil health at the project site.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The irrigation conversion methods are clearly defined and appropriate to address degraded water quality in the Powder River Basin.
- The maps included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity and proposed restoration components, along with its proximity to prior implemented projects.
- Converting from flood to sprinkler irrigation will conserve 335 acre-feet of water on this farm and have water quality and quantity benefits to the Powder River, a priority stream for conservation in the Baker Valley.
- The application identifies three restoration alternatives, and the applicant will implement the appropriate alternative based on field shape, economic feasibility, and crop rotation.

- When installed, the irrigation conversion may be a catalyst for other irrigation water management projects in the area.
- The landowner is actively working to improve livestock watering practices on their property, indicating the irrigation system is likely to be implemented and operated as proposed.
- The project team, including the landowner, have the capacity to implement and maintain the project as proposed.
- The Baker Valley SWCD has a proven track record of managing and completing projects as proposed and according to the project schedule.
- The budget reflects costs necessary to implement the irrigation conversion and is based on current market rates.

Concerns

- The application lacks technical details for some project components needed to evaluate whether all the restoration approaches are appropriate solutions for the project site. For example, irrigation runoff will still occur due to flood irrigation remaining in place in the field corners and converting permanent pasture into cultivated crops will store less carbon.

Concluding Analysis

Converting 335 flood irrigated acres to pivot irrigation will reduce irrigation wastewater in the project area and reduce sediment, nutrient, and bacteria runoff. The project is likely to succeed in continuing work in the Baker City area that implements Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality water quality improvement objectives for the Powder River.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

5 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$498,136

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$498,136

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5003-23937
Project Name: Keeping it Cold at Schneider Meadows
Applicant: Powder Basin WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $235,091

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Baker
Total Cost: $524,317

Application Description Schneider Meadows is a fen wetland along Meadow Creek, a tributary of Clear Creek in the Pine Creek Basin of eastern Baker County. The project site is approximately 8 air miles north of Halfway, Oregon. Water temperature monitoring throughout the Pine Creek Basin documents that water flowing out of the meadow is the coldest in the basin (Idaho Power Company unpublished data), supporting a population of native Bull Trout in Meadow Creek. The cold base flow in Meadow Creek is derived from groundwater-supported springs and stored in the fen wetland for protracted release throughout the base-flow season. However, channel incision caused by legacy impacts from livestock grazing has diminished the storage capacity of the Meadow by lowering the water table in the meadow, diminishing protracted release of the cold spring water. We propose to reconnect the Meadow Creek channel with its historic floodplain (the meadow) using both Stage 0 Restoration (channel fill) and low-tech process-based restoration (beaver dam analogs and large wood placement) techniques. In addition, we propose to construct a buck and pole fence around the perimeter of the meadow to exclude grazing by domestic livestock. This project will directly benefit the population of ESA-listed Bull Trout by securing the cold-water source from the Meadow and protecting it into the future. The majority of the meadow is on public lands administered by the US Forest Service. Approximately 2 acres of the 18-acre meadow is under private ownership. The Idaho Power Company is sponsoring development of the project through its Hells Canyon Hydroelectric Complex Tributary Habitat Enhancement Plan (THEP), including funding of engineering plan development, cultural resource investigations and removal-fill permitting. Implementation funding partners include the Idaho Power Company, US Forest service and OWEB. The private landowner supports the project.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The scope of work in the proposed solution section of the application has clear objectives and activities for implementing stage 0 methods, low-tech process-based restoration (LTPBR), and project area exclusion fencing to benefit bull trout and maintain good water quality.

- The proposed restoration will address actions identified in local, state, and federal recovery plans for the Pine Creek basin to improve bull trout habitat by improving aquatic habitat complexity, maintaining cold water conditions, and protecting the restoration with livestock exclusion fencing.

- The proposed stage 0 restoration approach is technically sound; implementing actions will rehydrate fen habitat in the area and material needed to implement this work will come from adjacent uplands. At project completion the material source area will become additional connected floodplain, which will increase the aquatic habitat benefits of the project.
- Alternative design options were evaluated before selecting the proposed strategy.
- The project team has the capacity and relevant experience to implement the project.
- The applicant has a consistent track record for implementing similar high-quality projects in Baker County.
- The application budget includes details clearly describing project costs.

Concerns

- The restoration approach may not match the site conditions. Placing the stage 0 restoration above the planned LTPBR may result in reduced sediment transport that is necessary to the success of the LTPBR downstream.
- Some treatments proposed may not be effective. For example, this system experiences high spring flows and it is unclear how these conditions will impact the selected restoration approach.
- The application lacks technical details for some project components needed to evaluate whether all the restoration approaches are appropriate solutions for the project sites. For example, restoration actions in fen habitat trigger additional permitting requirements that could lead to significant design changes beyond the 60% designs submitted with the application.

Concluding Analysis

The Powder Basin Watershed Council proposes to restore fen habitat on Meadow Creek in the Pine basin near Halfway. Project design is at 60% and it is unclear how environmental compliance requirements will change the restoration actions as the design is finalized. If this application is resubmitted, it is recommended that designs are complete with known environmental compliance requirements to demonstrate a clear scope of work.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5004-23945
Project Name: Hog Wild Thinning Phase II_CLONE
Applicant: Malheur WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $131,869

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Harney
Total Cost: $231,919

Application Description 1) The project is near Hog Flat and the Malheur River. It is about 25 air miles to Seneca.

2) This is Phase II of a thinning project. Juniper are invading pine and Douglas-fir stands . The invasion is degrading forest health, wildlife habitat, and could foster insect and disease, and disastrous wildfire. The western end of the property is within core sage grouse habitat. Juniper are beginning to invade these open areas. Federally listed bull trout inhabit the nearby Malheur River.

Phase II will finish the thinning on private land and will include a neighboring parcel of DSL owned and managed land.

Approximately 312 acres are in need of treatment.

3) Chainsaws will be used to cut 312 acres of juniper and pine. All juniper, except the trees that fit "old-growth" characteristics will be cut. In the Douglas-fir -Ponderosa Pine stands we will thin from below removing trees up to 10” DBH to create 16' X 16' spacing between trees below 10” DBH.

Slash will be hand-piled for later cool-season burning. Slash piles will be kept below 4-feet to prevent roost habitat for predators of sage grouse. On 44 acres of low density juniper control thinning slash will be lopped and scattered.

4) Partners are the landowner, Department of State Lands, the High Desert Partnership, and the Malheur WSC

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Maps and photos included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, current forest conditions, and proximity of previous restoration completed nearby.

- The scope of work in the proposed solution section of the application has clear objectives and activities to enhance watershed resiliency to withstand wildfire and climate change, improve the mountain mahogany habitat type, improve sage-grouse and wildlife habitat, and enhance riparian conditions on the property.
- The proposed forest thinning approach is technically sound. The approach was developed with advice from an experienced thinning contractor and will adhere to Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) guidelines.
- The project demonstrates a strategic approach to forest management in the project area by building on a successful phase one thinning project on the property and thinning that occurred on adjacent properties.
- Prioritized actions in watershed plans, including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Sage-grouse Initiative and the Oregon Conservation Strategy, will be implemented.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project.
- The project team has a consistent track record for implementing similar high-quality projects.
- The overall project cost is reasonable for the expected watershed health benefits.

Concerns

- A notice of operation will be required by Oregon Department of Forestry and this requirement is not identified on the application permit page.

Concluding Analysis

The Malheur Watershed Council proposes to enhance watershed resiliency and improve a variety of wildlife habitats through conifer thinning. This will provide habitat benefit to native fish and wildlife, including sage-grouse, and improve water quality in the upper Malheur watershed.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$131,869

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$131,869

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5005-23946
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Three Times The Benefit Along The Malheur River Water Quality Improvement
Applicant: Malheur WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
County: Malheur
OWEB Request: $180,721
Total Cost: $402,041

Application Description

1) This project is located near Harper, OR. Two of the three fields connect directly with the Malheur River. The three fields are split by Hwy 20.

2) Water quality improvement in the Malheur Basin is one of the top restoration priorities for the Malheur Watershed Council. Improved water quality is achieved through on-farm irrigation infrastructure improvements and management. The Council, in cooperation with irrigation districts and private landowners, has been systematically improving water quality through irrigation system conversions over the past 20 plus years across the Malheur Basin. This project complements several recently completed and on-going water quality improvement projects in the area.

3) The proposed project will convert three fields totaling about 135 acres from flood to sprinkler irrigation by installing:
-- 3 Pivots
-- 14 Pivot Crossings
-- 3 6” Pivot Tie Ins w/ 4” Valves
-- Trench/Lay/ Backfill
-- 2020 ft of 6” Pipe
-- 1180 ft of 8” Pipe
-- 3560 ft of CBL IN Conduit 4#4 w/ 2#12
-- 400 ft CBL In Conduit 3#1/0, 2#12
-- Cleaning Screen
-- Pump Station
-- 2 Flow Meters
-- 20 HP Turbine Pump
-- Set Concrete Box
-- West Pivot Pump Station Tie In
-- 20 HP Pump

4) Partners on this project include the landowner and the Malheur Watershed Council.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has clear objectives and activities for achieving the objectives. The restoration methods are clearly defined and appropriate to address degraded water quality in the Malheur River Basin.
- The photos, maps, and water quality data included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, proposed restoration components, and proximity of previously implemented restoration projects.
- Pivot irrigation is appropriate for the topography. The irrigation system will serve as a demonstration to other landowners and may encourage future water quality projects.
- Converting from flood to sprinkler irrigation may conserve 101 acre-feet of water on this farm and have water quality, and potentially water quantity benefits, to the Malheur River, a priority stream for conservation in Malheur County.
- Three restoration alternatives are identified in the application, and the applicant will implement the appropriate alternative based on field shape and economic feasibility.
- The new irrigation system will improve water quality in the Malheur River by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria runoff from the project site.
- Flood to sprinkler irrigation conversion is an Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) action plan priority.
- The Malheur Watershed Council has completed many irrigation water management projects and has the capacity to implement the project as proposed and according to schedule.
- The landowner has completed similar irrigation water management work on their property, indicating the irrigation system is likely to be implemented and operated as proposed.
- The budget was developed using an irrigation company bid, reflects costs necessary to implement the irrigation conversion, and is based on current market rates.

Concerns

- The application lacks grazing management information needed to determine whether the project approach will achieve the proposed restoration objectives.

Concluding Analysis

Converting 135 irrigated acres from flood to sprinkler application will reduce irrigation wastewater. The proposed irrigation conversion near Harper will further efforts to implement Oregon Department of Agriculture and DEQ water quality improvement objectives by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria delivery to the Malheur River.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

8 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$180,721

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5006-23967
Project Name: Plumb Bob Water Quality Improvement
Applicant: Owyhee WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $236,547

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $448,617

Application Description The Plumb Bob Water Quality Improvement Project is located 7 miles South of Ontario in the proposed Mid-Snake Water Quality and Conservation project area.

The project area consists of 90.25 acres of row cropped agricultural land currently irrigated with flood/furrow irrigation. Tailwater containing sediment, nutrients and bacteria flow off the project area into the Plummer Drain then the Snake River.

The proposed work includes converting 96 acres from flood/furrow to sprinkler irrigation through the installation of 3 pivot systems, handline sprinklers in pivot corners and all required system conveyance/electrical infrastructure. Implementation of the project will eliminate tailwater return flows from the project area, and in turn address non-point source contaminant contributions to the Snake River.

Project partners include: the landowner, Old Owyhee Irrigation District, Owyhee Watershed Council, and Romans Precision Irrigation.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has clear objectives and activities for achieving the objectives. The restoration methods are clearly defined and appropriate to address degraded water quality in the Snake River Basin.
- The maps and handouts included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, the proposed restoration components, and proximity to prior implemented projects.
- Pivot irrigation is appropriate for the topography. The irrigation system will serve as a demonstration to other landowners and may encourage future water quality projects.
- Converting from flood to sprinkler irrigation may conserve 68 acre-feet of water on this farm and have water quality benefits to the Snake River, a priority stream for conservation in the Malheur County.

- Four restoration alternatives are identified in the application, and the applicant will implement the appropriate alternative based on field shape, economic feasibility, and crop rotation.
- Flood to sprinkler irrigation conversion addresses an Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) action plan priority by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria laden runoff from the property, which will contribute to water quality benefits to the Snake River.
- The Owyhee Watershed Council has completed many irrigation water management projects in the Owyhee basin and has the capacity to implement the project as proposed and according to the project schedule.
- The application budget includes details clearly describing project costs.

Concerns

- The application states that the project will occur on both 90 and 96 acres, and it is unclear how many acres the project will impact.
- The design alternatives section of the application does not articulate the cost difference between the one and three pivot options and the cost benefit ratio for the preferred option is uncertain.

Concluding Analysis

Converting 96 flood irrigated acres to pivot irrigation will reduce irrigation wastewater in the project area and reduce sediment, nutrient, and bacteria runoff. The project is likely to succeed in continuing implementation of Oregon Department of Agriculture and the DEQ water quality improvement objectives for the Snake River.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

13 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$236,547

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5007-23977
Project Name: Just South of Bully Creek Reservoir Water Quality Improvement
Applicant: Malheur WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $123,840
Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $384,070

Application Description

1) This project is located 6.79 air miles outside of Vale, OR and less than two miles Southeast of the Bully Creek Reservoir.

2) Water quality improvement in the Malheur Basin is one of the top restoration priorities. The current flood irrigation system impairs water quality through bacteria and chemical-laden runoff during irrigation. Water quality improvement is achieved through on-farm irrigation infrastructure improvements and management. Malheur Watershed Council, in cooperation with irrigation districts and private landowners, has been systematically improving water quality through irrigation system conversions over the past 20-plus years across the Malheur Basin. Falling into a newer priority area of the Malheur WSC's, the Vale Bench project will impact water quality in the area. Malheur WSC recently was successful in obtaining a BOR WaterSmart grant which will pipe irrigation delivery canals in the Vale Bench Priority area. Piping the earthen laterals will save water and improve water management. This project is North of that work. Additionally, tail water from this field flows through a ditch that enters Bully Creek between 2,600-3,600 feet away.

3) This project will improve water quality through the conversion of 144.2 acres of flood irrigated pasture, hay, and row crop fields to sprinkler irrigation. The project will include the installation of:

--Pivot 1
--Pivot 2
--35 Sprinkler Solid Set
--25 HP Pump
--20 HP Pump (2)
--7.5 HP Pump
--Pump Stations (2)
--Pump Tie In (2)
--600ft 10" Pipe
--560ft 8" Pipe
--2200ft 6" Pipe
--910ft 4" Pipe

--780ft 3” Pipe
--780ft 2” Pipe Glue
--8” Z-Pipe
--6” Z-Pipe
--1740ft CBL IN Conduit
--5795 Trench/Lay/Backfill
--Fitting Allowance
--Misc. Fittings
--Electrical Allowance

4) Partners in this project include the landowner and Malheur Watershed Council.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has clear objectives and activities for achieving the objectives. The restoration methods are clearly defined and appropriate to address degraded water quality in the Malheur River Basin.
- The photos, maps, and water quality data included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, proposed restoration components, and proximity of previously implemented restoration projects.
- Pivot irrigation is appropriate for the topography. The irrigation system will serve as a demonstration to other landowners and may encourage future water quality projects.
- Three restoration alternatives are identified in the application, and the applicant will implement the appropriate alternative based on field shape and economic feasibility.
- The new irrigation system will improve water quality in the Malheur River by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria runoff from the project site.
- Flood to sprinkler irrigation conversion is an Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) action plan priority.
- The Malheur Watershed Council has completed many irrigation water management projects and has the capacity to implement the project as proposed and according to schedule.
- The budget was developed using an irrigation company bid, reflects costs necessary to implement the irrigation conversion, and is based on current market rates.

Concerns

- The application lacks technical details for some project components needed to evaluate whether all the restoration approaches are appropriate solutions for the project sites. For example, it is unclear how the landowner grazes the property and how the pivot corners will be managed post-project; a more comprehensive plan to manage the grazing is needed to determine project success.

Concluding Analysis

Converting 144 irrigated acres from flood to sprinkler application will reduce irrigation wastewater. The proposed irrigation conversion near Vale will further efforts to implement Oregon Department of Agriculture and DEQ water quality improvement objectives by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria delivery to Bully Creek.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund with Conditions

Review Team Priority

12 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$123,840

Review Team Conditions

As a condition of the project completion report submit a grazing management plan that demonstrates grazing will not degrade water quality including sediment, nutrient, and bacteria contribution to Bully Creek.

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5008-23993
Project Name: White Dog Water Quality Improvement Project
Applicant: Owyhee WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $105,426
Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $244,107

Application Description The White Dog Water Quality Improvement Project is located 7 miles North of Adrian. The project consists of 37 acres of hay/ row cropland currently irrigated by gated pipe. Tailwater containing sediment nutrients and bacteria flow off of the project area and into Spring Draw Drain, the Bishop Drain, the Owyhee River, eventually leading to the Snake River. The proposed work includes converting 37 acres from flood to sprinkler irrigation through the installation of 2 Zimmatic Pivots, 6 solid set sprinklers and all required pressurized conveyance infrastructure. Project partners include: The landowner, Owyhee Watershed Council, and Agrillines Irrigation.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has clear objectives and activities for achieving the objectives. The restoration methods are clearly defined and appropriate to address degraded water quality in the Owyhee River Basin.
- The maps and handouts included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, the proposed restoration components, and proximity to prior implemented projects.
- Pivot and solid set irrigation is appropriate for the topography. The irrigation system will serve as a demonstration to other landowners and may encourage future water quality projects.
- Four restoration alternatives are identified in the application, and the applicant will implement the appropriate alternative based on field shape, economic feasibility, and crop rotation.
- Flood to sprinkler irrigation conversion addresses an Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) action plan priority by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria laden runoff from the property, which will provide water quality benefits to the Owyhee River.
- The Owyhee Watershed Council has completed many irrigation water management projects in the Owyhee basin and has the capacity to implement the project as proposed and according to the project schedule.
- The application budget includes details clearly describing project costs.

Concerns

- A portion of the project area is not currently irrigated, and it is unclear how water conservation and water quality improvement will result by adding more irrigated acres into crop production.
- Some of the treatments proposed may not be effective. For example, adding acres to crop production may increase water use and not result in additional reservoir storage or improved water quality in the Owyhee River.

Concluding Analysis

The Owyhee Watershed Council proposes to reinstate and improve irrigation on 37-acres near Adrian. It is unclear how increasing the number of irrigated acres will lead to water conservation, water quality improvement, or improved fish and wildlife habitat in the Owyhee Basin.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5009-23995
Project Name: Hidden Oasis Water Quality Improvement Project
Applicant: Owyhee WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $157,335

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $209,835

Application Description The Hidden Oasis Water Quality Improvement Project is located 25 miles South of Adrian. The project area consists of 102 acres of row cropped agricultural land currently irrigated with flood/furrow irrigation. Tailwater containing sediment, nutrients, and bacteria flow off the project area into Succor Creek and then the Snake River. This will be the first phase of a 3-phase water quality improvement project. The proposed work in Phase 1 includes converting 43 acres from earthen ditch to border irrigation through the installation of an Inlet Valve and 5,200ft of pipe. Implementation of the project will eliminate tailwater return flows from the project area and in turn improve water quality in Succor Creek and eventually the Snake River. Project partners include the landowner, Owyhee Watershed Council, and Aqua Irrigation Technologies.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application narrative and maps and photos included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, the project footprint, and future irrigation water management phases.

Concerns

- Five restoration alternatives are identified, but the preferred alternative is not discussed in the proposed solution section of the application, and it is unclear why the border irrigation method is the chosen alternative.
- Benefits from a restoration investment may be limited because redband trout, a species of concern in Oregon, occupy Succor Creek. The irrigation point of diversion is not currently fish screened and the scope of work does not include installing a fish screen, which is necessary to keep fish out of the irrigation system.
- The restoration approach may not match the site conditions. Border irrigation methods require field leveling and border construction and neither of these elements are described in the application.

- Some of the treatments proposed may not be effective. For example, without field leveling and border construction as part of the project, the amount of water conserved will be low and the potential for runoff remains high post-project.
- Future irrigation water management phases on the property do not appear to be currently irrigated, and it is unclear how water conservation and water quality improvement will result by adding more irrigated acres into crop production.
- The application narrative and uploaded maps do not describe the proximity of the proposed work to other restoration in the area, and it is difficult to determine how the project will build on previous investments in the Succor Creek drainage.
- The watershed benefit for the cost is uncertain.

Concluding Analysis

The Owyhee Watershed Council proposes to improve irrigation practices on 43-acres in the Succor Creek watershed. The scope of work presented in the application does not describe the actions needed to implement irrigation conversion and achieve ecological uplift. Benefits to fish, water conservation, and water quality improvement are not fully researched and if this application is resubmitted, the applicant is encouraged to address the concerns identified in this evaluation.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5011-24004
Project Name: HawkEye V2
Applicant: Malheur SWCD
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $94,590

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $326,275

Application Description 1. The project is located 8 miles west of Ontario in the Morgan Bench Priority Area and encompasses a 99-acre farm with irrigable cropland that currently utilizes flood irrigation. The farm is part of the NRCS Valley View Priority Area and the SWCD FAAP area. Runoff from the farm flows through neighboring properties via buried drain lines and open ditches, eventually entering the Shoestring Canal, carrying sediments and nutrients that impact water quality downstream. The farm is positioned directly underneath the North canal, adjacent to the Morgan Feedlot Pipeline, but does not benefit from the pressurized line.

2. The current need for the project arises from the farm 99-acre contribution to increased sediment loads in the Shoestring Canal due to polluted irrigation return flows and livestock usage of pastures that are currently flood irrigation. The farm currently supports 75 pairs of livestock annually and uses 100% surface irrigation.

3. The proposed work involves installing three pivots to convert 83.2 acres from flood to pivot irrigation. This conversion aims to reduce nutrient-rich runoff and E.coli contamination. Additionally, 12 acres will remain under flood irrigation, and approximately 20 small volunteer elm trees will be removed for the1/2 circle pivot. Furthermore, Owyhee Irrigation District (OID) will replace takeout box #3 with a new box equipped with a cleaning screen.

4. The project partners include the landowner, NRCS, SWCD, Owyhee Irrigation District (OID), and Romans Precision Irrigation (RPI).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by improving the maps to show the location of the irrigation improvements, water sources, how previous conservation efforts on the property interact with this project, and how wastewater will be managed.
- The photos, maps, and water quality data included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, proposed restoration components, and proximity of previously implemented restoration projects.

- The project is in the Morgan Bench Priority Area, which is a focus area for Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to improve water quality in the Malheur River.
- Converting 83 flood irrigated acres to sprinkler application will address water quality priorities in the Morgan Bench priority area.
- Converting from flood to sprinkler irrigation may conserve 62 acre-feet of water on this farm and have water quality benefits to the Malheur River, a priority stream for water quality in the Malheur County.
- Three restoration alternatives are identified in the application, and the applicant will implement the appropriate alternative based on field shape, economic feasibility, and crop rotation.
- Flood to sprinkler irrigation conversion addresses a DEQ Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) action plan priority by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria laden runoff from the property, which will contribute to water quality benefits to the Malheur River.
- The project is strategic because it is near previously completed and planned future on-farm irrigation improvements.
- The project team has relevant experience and a proven track record for implementing irrigation water management projects.
- The application budget is informed by an irrigation company bid and reflects current costs and rates necessary to implement the project.

Concerns

- The application lacks technical details for some project components needed to evaluate whether all the restoration approaches are appropriate solutions for the project sites. For example, it is unclear why continued flood irrigation in the pivot corners is preferred over a more efficient irrigation method.

Concluding Analysis

Converting 83 irrigated acres from flood to sprinkler application will reduce irrigation wastewater. The proposed irrigation conversion in the Morgan Bench priority area will further efforts to implement ODA and DEQ water quality improvement objectives by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria delivery to the Malheur River.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

10 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$94,590

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5012-24014
Project Name: Boon For The Malheur River
Applicant: Malheur SWCD
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $97,244

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $419,254

Application Description 1. The Boon for the Malheur River project is located about 5 miles southwest of Vale, Oregon and consists of approximately 114 acres of irrigable cropland. The boon project borders the Malheur River. The Boon project drains directly into the Malheur River to be used by other farmers downstream and eventually into the Snake River. Sediments and nutrients that wash off fields are passed onto the downstream users and contribute to overall water quality impairments. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has listed the Malheur River and its tributaries on the 303(d) list, indicating significant water quality issues, primarily due to excessive water temperatures, alongside elevated levels of bacteria, nutrients, Chlorophyll a, and toxins exceeding state standards.

2. Most of the sediment, nutrients, and bacteria in the Malheur River at this point and below come from polluted irrigation return flows or livestock access to surface water. Historically farmers in the area fertilize their land and a residual amount of chemicals, e-coli and nutrients can be carried off the field with the runoff from flood irrigation. This farm is fairly typical and is currently using 100% surface irrigation.

3. By installing a full circle and partial swipe center pivots with pipeline, pump and flowmeter, the landowner will be able to achieve a zero water runoff practice that will enhance the downstream water quality. Warmsprings Irrigation district is fully on board with this project and has already preapproved the water right transfer that will be necessary.

4. The partners for this project are the landowner, Malheur County SWCD and Warmsprings Irrigation District.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The photos, maps, and water quality data included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity and the proposed restoration components.
- Converting 114 flood irrigated acres to sprinkler application will address water quality priorities in the Malheur Basin.

- Converting from flood to sprinkler irrigation will have water quality, and possibly water quantity, benefits to the Malheur River, a priority stream for water quality in the Malheur County.
- Three restoration alternatives are identified in the application, and the applicant will implement the appropriate alternative based on field shape, economic feasibility, and crop rotation.
- Flood to sprinkler irrigation conversion addresses an Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) action plan priority by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria laden runoff from the property, which will contribute to water quality benefits to the Malheur River.
- The project team has relevant experience and a proven track record for implementing irrigation water management projects.
- The application budget is informed by an irrigation company bid and reflects current costs and rates necessary to implement the project.

Concerns

- The application narrative and uploaded maps do not describe the proximity of the proposed work to other restoration in the area, and it is difficult to determine how the project will build on previous investments in the Vale area.

Concluding Analysis

Converting 114 irrigated acres from flood to sprinkler application will reduce irrigation wastewater. The proposed irrigation conversion in the Vale area will further efforts to implement Oregon Department of Agriculture and DEQ water quality improvement objectives by reducing sediment, nutrient, and bacteria delivery to the Malheur River.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

7 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$97,244

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5013-24015
Project Name: Fire Matters
Applicant: Malheur SWCD
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $152,375

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $211,415

Application Description The Hole in the Ground fire was sparked by lightning on July 24,2024, approximately 10 miles south of Owyhee Reservoir and traveled 22.5 miles to the south and 24 miles NW of Jordan Valley, Oregon in Malheur County. It burned an estimated 98,855 acres, most of which was BLM ground. This area contains the Jordan Craters ACEC/RNA (Area of Critical Environmental Concern/Research Natural Area). This borders the project area. The work proposed in this grant application includes activities not funded by NRCS or FSA. Proposed activities include herbaceous weed control and seeding to address post-fire erosion, as well as fencing to protect against grazing during rest periods.

The Fire Matters Project is located in Malheur County approximately 2.5 miles west of Danner, Oregon or 17.5 miles west of Jordan Valley, Oregon in Township 30S, Range 43E in portions of sections 11, 12 and portions of Township 30S, Range 44E Section 7. The project is north of Hwy 95. The project consists of 446 acres of rangeland to be chemically treated for control of invasive cheatgrass, medusahead and scotch thistle after a fire and 13,060 feet of exclusion fencing. Chemical application will be done aerially because of the rocky terrain.

Fire destroyed 446 acres of sage grouse habitat in which a portion was an NRCS invasive weed control project and the other portion a LIT (Pheasants Forever) fire mitigation project also attacking invasive weeds. Because of the fire, both adjoining projects were withdrawn because the chemical application of Rejuva was no longer a viable solution.

The work will be the aerial application of Imazapic and Milestone (thistle control) followed by at least one year of rest (no grazing) followed by reseeding with a mix recommended by NRCS. An exclusion fence will be installed to prevent grazing during the rest period.

The partners in this project are the landowner, the Malheur Co. SWCD and the NRCS along with the Jordan Valley Cooperative Weed Management Area.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The scope of work in the proposed solution section of the application has clear objectives and activities such as seeding, herbicide application, fencing, and a livestock water development necessary for post fire recovery.

- The proposed restoration approach is technically sound by deferring livestock grazing post- project and resuming grazing based on vegetation recovery results rather than after a specified period of time.
- The proposed restoration approach is timely by allowing an immediate deferment of grazing from the burned area and the installation of infrastructure to facilitate the deferment.
- The project builds on previous Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) investments such as invasive annual grass (IAG) control, non-native invasive weed management, and the installation of range management infrastructure.
- The project team, including the Jordan Valley Cooperative Weed Management Area (JVCWMA), has relevant experience and a proven track record for implementing range management projects post fire.
- The application budget is informed by local contractor bids and reflects current costs and rates necessary to implement the project.

Concerns

- The application lacks technical details for some project components needed to evaluate whether all the restoration approaches are appropriate solutions for the project sites. For example, the plant page in the application indicates the measure of planting success is 80% cover, and it is unclear if the 80% cover refers to the preferred planted species or any species including IAGs, non-native invasive weeds, or other undesirable vegetation.
- The seed mix identified in the application identifies grasses and one forb species. The landscape setting is a sage-steppe habitat and brush species including sage, rabbit, and bitter brush should be considered for inclusion in the seed mix.
- The application lacks details describing the current grazing management on the property. More information is needed regarding grazing practices and how the proposed watering trough and fencing will help facilitate this management post fire and following recovery.
- Benefits from a restoration investment may be limited because the area is dominated by invasive annual grasses and the project actions as proposed may not improve this condition post project.

Concluding Analysis

The Malheur SWCD proposes to restore 446-acres of rangeland near Danner, Oregon following the 2024 Hole in the Ground fire. It is unclear how some aspects of the project are likely to succeed and more information regarding current grazing practices, the appropriateness of the seed mix, and measure of success is needed to determine if the project will result in ecological uplift.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

11 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$152,375

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5014-24020
Project Type: Restoration_v2
Project Name: Rebuilding Core Sage Steppe Communities Post Wildfire
Applicant: Malheur WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
County: Malheur
OWEB Request: $205,870
Total Cost: $7,858,477

Application Description The Rebuilding Core Sage Steppe Communities Post Wildfire project will take place on four different properties affected by the Cow Valley and Durkee fires located in the Cow Valley area of Northern Malheur County.
239,504 acres of privately owned good condition rangeland was affected by these fires. Critical management infrastructure such as fences and water developments were destroyed which are vital to implementing post fire vegetation management actions that will reduce the establishment of invasive annual grasses and ensure critical Sage Grouse habitat can be restored.

This project will leverage funding with Farm Service Agency to rebuild/repair 165 miles of private rangeland fences. Reconstruction of these fences will allow private landowners to implement further vegetative management actions such as: herbicide application, re-seeding, deferred grazing, and targeted grazing.

Project partners include: private landowners, NRCS, FSA, Malheur Rangeland Partnership, ODFW, USFWS, and OSU extension.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The proposed restoration approach to replace fences that burned in the Cow Valley and Durkee fires in 2024 is essential rangeland infrastructure to facilitate post-fire grazing management.
- The proposed restoration is timely and will address actions identified in local, state, and federal sage-grouse recovery plans by replacing livestock management fences essential to proper grazing management in this core sage-grouse habitat where these populations were stable or increasing pre-fire.
- Pre-fire rangelands were in good condition and provided needed habitat for sage-grouse and all landowners are enrolled in the Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances program, designed to improve sage-steppe habitat on private lands.

- The project team, including landowners and local, state, and federal agency partners, have relevant experience and a proven track record for implementing range post-fire management projects.
- The application budget is informed by Farm Service Agency fencing rates and reflects current costs and rates necessary to implement the project.
- The overall project cost is reasonable for the expected watershed health benefits.

Concerns

- No alternatives to the proposed approach were considered. For example, it is unclear why replacing fence post fire in the exact pre-fire locations is the preferred alternative when a revised fencing plan may result in additional improvements to rangeland conditions.
- The application lacks technical details for some project components needed to evaluate whether all the restoration approaches are appropriate solutions for the project sites. For example, it is unclear if fence markers will be installed on the fence which is a necessary feature in this core sage-grouse habitat.
- The application lacks design information needed to determine whether the project approach will achieve the proposed restoration objectives. For example, it is unclear how the rangeland will respond post fire, which may indicate additional restoration alternatives are necessary to achieve the restoration objectives.

Concluding Analysis

The Malheur Watershed Council proposes to rebuild 165-miles of burned fence following the 2024 Cow Valley and Durkee fires. It is unclear why rebuilding fences as they existed pre fire is the alternative that will result in the most benefit to sage-grouse in this sage steppe landscape. While it is understood fencing is necessary to manage domestic livestock, the application narrative does not clearly articulate the ecological benefits of the proposed restoration actions, and a technical assistance phase that considers alternatives and post-fire vegetation response may be more appropriate.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

14 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$205,870

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5015-24025
Project Name: Burnt Toast Phase 1
Applicant: Malheur SWCD
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $209,293

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $526,489

Application Description 1) The project aims to fence 5,000 acres of private land within the fire perimeter of the 2024 Cow Valley Fire in Malheur County.

2) The human-caused Cow Valley Fire started on July 11, 2024,burning a total of 133,490 acres of rangeland before containment was declared
in early August. Burn severity varied throughout the fire with some vegetation patches remaining while other areas experienced high vegetation mortality rates. The rangelands within the fire perimeter are important to the local economy through ranching activities and have impacted core nesting and wintering habitats for greater sage-grouse. Rehabilitating this area will take years and this project is intended to be the first phase of post-fire restoration efforts.

3) We (SWCD) are proposing to install

Fence Repair	21.5 miles
Drill Stem Corner	37 each
Drill Stem H Braces	170 each
Drill Stem Gate Posts/Gates	34 each
White Top/ Thistle Treatment	400 acres first time, followed by 200 spot treatment 6 months later
Water Development repairs(fire)	7 repairs

Troughs 1,2, and 6 need panel and wiring repair
Trough 3, 4, and 5 need a new spring box
System 7, pump reset

Forage Kochia Firebreak
167 acres/5.5 mile/250 ft wide

Partners- On the rebuild
Forage Kochia Firebreak-NRCS

4 miles 250 ft wide	373 acres
6 lbs per acre seed	726 lbs
NRCS Water Development	2 New troughs

Herbicide treatment 24 acres for medushead

FSA	21.5 miles of fence

4) Partners include the landowner, Farm Service Agency, NRCS, and SWCD.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The proposed restoration approach to replace fence, control invasive vegetation, install firebreaks, and repair livestock watering systems that burned in the Cow Valley fire in 2024 is essential rangeland infrastructure to facilitate post-fire grazing management.
- The proposed restoration is timely and will address actions identified in local, state, and federal sage-grouse recovery plans by replacing livestock management infrastructure essential to proper grazing management in this core sage-grouse habitat where these populations were stable or increasing pre fire.
- Pre-fire rangelands were in good condition and provided essential habitat for sage-grouse.
- The project team, including the landowner and local, state, and federal agency partners, have relevant experience and a proven track record for implementing range post-fire management projects.
- The application budget is informed by Farm Service Agency fencing rates and reflects current costs and rates necessary to implement the project.

Concerns

- The application has many project components, and it is difficult to understand how some of the objectives will be met. For example, it is unclear how the specific actions will improve the sage-steppe habitat and benefit sage-grouse post project.
- The application is not clearly written, the goals and actions do not articulate habitat restoration outcomes, and the uploaded photos do not show fire damage to the existing watering troughs, making it difficult to determine the restoration benefit in this sage-steppe habitat.
- No alternatives to the proposed approach were considered. For example, it is unclear why replacing fence post fire in the exact pre-fire locations is the preferred alternative when a revised plan may result in additional improvements to rangeland conditions.

- The application lacks technical details for some project components needed to evaluate whether all the restoration approaches are appropriate solutions for the project sites. For example, firebreaks are prescribed inside the property boundary and along the adjacent state route 26. Maintenance of the firebreak is not described in the application narrative and forage kochia is a wildlife feed source and not appropriate for seeding along a state highway due to vehicle and wildlife conflicts.

- The application lacks design information needed to determine whether the project approach will achieve the proposed restoration objectives. For example, it is unclear how the rangeland will respond post fire, which may indicate additional restoration alternatives are necessary to achieve the restoration objectives.

- Potential measurable water quality and sage-grouse habitat improvements briefly described in the application may be optimistic based on the range infrastructure replacement actions described in the proposal.

Concluding Analysis

The Malheur SWCD proposes to rebuild fence, control invasive weeds, install 2 firebreaks, and repair livestock watering troughs on private property following the 2024 Cow Valley fire. It is unclear why rebuilding fences and troughs as they existed pre fire is the alternative that will result in the most benefit to sage-grouse in this sage-steppe landscape. While it is understood rangeland infrastructure is necessary to manage domestic livestock, the application narrative does not clearly articulate the ecological benefits of the work, and a technical assistance phase that considers alternatives and post fire vegetation response may be more appropriate.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

15 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$209,293

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5016-24031
Project Name: Little Creek Buffalo Flats Restoration
Applicant: Union SWCD
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $380,385

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Union
Total Cost: $2,112,370

Application Description The Little Creek Buffalo Flats Restoration project is located on the Buffalo Peak Land and Livestock property east and adjacent to the City of Union, Oregon and within the Catherine Creek Watershed. This proposal focuses on the north portion of the 268-acre project area and includes 1.25 miles of Little Creek and 97 acres of associated floodplain. This is a portion of the larger 628-acre cattle ranch owned by Buffalo Peak Land and Livestock LLC. The property has been managed under private ownership for over a century for farming and ranching, with most of the historic floodplain in hay and pasture production. The river channels and floodplains have been negatively impacted by channel straightening, bank erosion, and downcutting. This project will increase the quality and quantity of in-stream and floodplain habitats for ESA-listed Snake River Chinook salmon, steelhead and bull trout by increasing sinuosity of the primary channels, addition of secondary and side channels, creation of connected floodplain surfaces, and addition of large woody material and planting.

The property was purchased in 2018 by owners that plan to use a holistic
working lands approach to raise livestock while improving ecological conditions for fish and wildlife populations. The Union SWCD is developing a Land Mangement Plan with the landowners that spells out the monitoring methodology and management plan the landowners will use for maintaining and achieving the ecological condition goals that restoring the natural process function and aquatic habitat conditions this restoration project is designed to achieve in support of ESA-listed salmonids. The Land Management Plan will become part of the property deed so that the restoration project investment will be protected into perpetuity.

Project Partners: Landowners, Grande Ronde Model Watershed, BPA, BOR, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation, and Trout Unlimited.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The restoration methods are clearly defined and appropriate to address degraded aquatic habitat, improve water quality, improve riparian and floodplain vegetation, and reconnect Little Creek to the adjacent floodplain.

- The photos and maps included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, proposed restoration components, and proximity of previously implemented restoration projects in Catherine Creek and fish passage work downstream in Little Creek.
- Three restoration alternatives are identified in the application, and the applicant will implement the appropriate alternative to achieve the restoration objectives.
- The proposed restoration is a high priority for both state and federal fish management agencies and will address actions identified in local, state, and federal bull trout, Chinook salmon, and steelhead recovery plans by restoring aquatic habitat in the Catherine Creek watershed.
- The project builds on previous and extensive OWEB, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), and Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) investments to restore resident and anadromous fish migration, spawning, and rearing habitat in the Catherine Creek Watershed.
- Providing access to and restoring aquatic habitat addresses changing climate conditions and contributes to durable adaptation and resilience for ecosystems in the Little Creek watershed.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project as proposed, on time, and according to the budget.
- The applicant is engaging appropriate partners and partner support is documented with construction match included in the application.
- The project team has a consistent track record for implementing similar high-quality projects.
- Long-term sustainability of the investment is demonstrated by the landowner’s intention to record a conservation easement on the property that references the land management plan included in the application. The Plan manages livestock in a way that will protect and promote the conservation and habitat restoration objectives post project.

Concerns

- The plan for long-term maintenance that will be required of the project lacks grazing specificity and more information is needed regarding rest, rotation, and timing to determine the likelihood of post restoration project success.
- Overall, the budget costs appear to be overestimated, not reflective of current market rates, and the watershed benefit for the cost is uncertain.

Concluding Analysis

The Union SWCD proposes to restore instream, riparian, and floodplain habitat on Little Creek near Union. The project will restore watershed function by extending available aquatic habitat for species of concern in Oregon as well as contribute to durable ecosystem resiliency to climate change impacts.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$380,385

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$380,385

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5017-24033
Project Name: Fire in the Wilkerness
Applicant: Malheur SWCD
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $67,308

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $110,824

Application Description The human caused Cow Valley Fire started on July 11, 2024 burning a total of 133,490 acres of rangeland before containment was declared in early August.
The Cow Valley fire was started approximately 35 miles northwest of Vale, Oregon in Malheur County. This project is located in Township 15S, Range 41E, in portions of sections 5 and 6. The project is north of Hwy 26. The project consists of 7360 feet of 1.5” poly pipeline and an on- demand delivery pump for the existing well and a water troughs. The work proposed in this grant application includes activities not funded by NRCS or FSA.
Burn severity varied throughout the fire with some vegetation patches remaining while other areas experienced high vegetation mortality rates. The rangelands within the fire perimeter are important to the local economy though ranching activities and have impacted core nesting and wintering habitat for greater sage-grouse. Rehabilitation of this area will take years and this project is intended to be the first phase of post-fire restoration efforts.
The project consists of 7360 feet of 1.5” poly pipeline and an on- demand delivery pump for the existing well and a wildlife friendly water trough.
The partners in this project are the landowner, the Malheur SWCD and the NRCS with technical assistance.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The proposed restoration is timely and will address actions identified in local, state, and federal sage-grouse recovery plans by replacing livestock management infrastructure essential to proper grazing management, including a livestock watering system and fencing, in this core sage-grouse habitat where pre-fire populations were stable or increasing.
- Pre-fire rangelands were in good condition and provided essential habitat for sage-grouse.
- The project team including the landowner, the SWCD, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have relevant experience and a proven track record for implementing post-fire range management projects.

Concerns

- The application has several project components, and it is difficult to understand how some of the objectives will be met. For example, it is unclear how the specific actions will improve the sage-steppe habitat and benefit sage-grouse post project.
- The application is not clearly written, the goals and actions do not articulate habitat restoration outcomes, and the uploaded maps do not show where fence will be removed, repaired, and replaced, making it difficult to determine the restoration benefit in this sage-steppe habitat.
- No alternatives to the proposed approach were considered. For example, it is unclear why replacing fence post-fire in the exact pre-fire locations is the preferred alternative when a revised plan may result in additional improvements to rangeland conditions.
- The application lacks technical details for some project components needed to evaluate whether all the restoration approaches are appropriate solutions for the project sites. For example, fence design parameters are not uploaded with the application, it is unclear if the new fence will be wildlife friendly, and a grazing management plan is needed to determine the likelihood of project success.
- The application lacks design information needed to determine whether the project approach will achieve the proposed restoration objectives. For example, it is unclear how the rangeland will respond post fire, which may indicate additional restoration alternatives are necessary to achieve the restoration objectives.
- Potential measurable mesic and sage-grouse habitat improvements briefly described in the application may be optimistic based on the range infrastructure replacement actions described in the application. The benefit of installing the stock watering system is unclear regarding how this system will improve stream and riparian conditions along Cow Creek.

Concluding Analysis

The Malheur SWCD proposes to remove fence, install new boundary fence, and install livestock watering troughs on private property following the 2024 Cow Valley fire. It is unclear why the proposed fence and trough work is the alternative that will result in the most benefit to sage-grouse in this sage-steppe landscape. While it is understood rangeland infrastructure is necessary to manage domestic livestock, the application narrative does not clearly articulate ecological benefits; a technical assistance phase that considers alternatives and post-fire vegetation response may be more appropriate.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5018-24039

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Post Fire Recovery and Restoration in Response to The Town Gulch and Coyote Fires

Applicant: Tri-County CWMA

Region: Eastern Oregon

County: Baker

OWEB Request: $530,441

Total Cost: $1,035,353

Application Description On Monday July 22nd, 2024, the Coyote fire was ignited by lightning. High winds rapidly carried the fire across 22,179 acres until its final containment on July 25th, 2024.The Coyote fire is located 5 miles southeast of Richland, Oregon. Pre fire plant communities vary by elevation within the burned area, but was primarily dominated by Wyoming big sagebrush and blue bunch wheatgrass. One of the greatest impacts of the Coyote fire was not only the loss of native vegetation, but also the loss of important winter range habitat for Mule deer and elk.
The Town Gulch Fire ignited due to lightning on August 4th, 2024 and was observed and reported on Monday, August 5th at 9:27 AM along Eagle Creek about eight miles northwest of Richland, Oregon. The Town Gulch fire burned a total of 18,220 acres before containment was reached. Pre fire vegetation and fuels vary depending on elevation. Lower elevations consisted of sage brush steppe ecosystems converting to mixed forests at higher elevations.
Restoration of these two fire areas have been combined into one proposal because they are both in similar climates and had equal effects on the community of Richland. Similar climate and region will result in similar noxious weed management strategies across both fire boundaries. Known noxious weed populations of concern prior to the fire consisted of scotch thistle (Onopordum acanthium), whitetop (Lepidium draba), medusahead (Taeniatherum caput-medusae), and rush skeletonweed (Chondrilla juncea). All of these species are known to respond very well after fire and spread very rapidly. The goal of this project is to minimize the spread of invasive noxious weeds and promote the success of native habitat rehabilitation. Project partners include Tri-County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA), Idaho Power, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Wallowa Whitman National Forest (WWNF), the Baker County Weed Department, and private landowners.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The restoration methods are clearly defined and appropriate to address broadleaf noxious weed and invasive annual grass establishment, as well as reseeding and restoration effectiveness monitoring following the 2024 Town Gulch and Coyote fires near Richland.

- The proposed restoration approach is technically sound by implementing vegetation management strategies that are known to be effective and the seed mix identified in the proposal is demonstrated to be effective in the Coyote Fire project area.

- The proposed restoration is timely and will address actions identified in local, state, and federal sage-grouse recovery plans by restoring sage-steppe habitat essential to sage-grouse viability post fire.
- the pre-fire rangelands were in good condition and provided essential habitat for sage-grouse.
- The project builds on previous and current investments in the vicinity by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Idaho Power Company (IPC) to improve sage-steppe habitat conditions both pre and post fire.
- The applicant has successfully built relationships with private landowners through a systematic approach to developing and implementing projects.
- The project team has the capacity to implement and maintain the project as proposed, including IPC who develops, tests, and implements methods to remove undesirable vegetation and promote healthy rangeland conditions.
- The project costs are reasonable for the proposed vegetation management actions and staging the work from Richland provides administrative cost efficiencies including seed and herbicide staging, as well as efficient contractor coordination.

Concerns

- No concerns were expressed during technical review.

Concluding Analysis

The Tri-County Cooperative Weed Management Area proposes to enhance watershed resiliency and improve a variety of wildlife habitats through rangeland improvement actions in Baker County near Richland. This will provide habitat benefit to native fish and wildlife, including sage grouse, and expedite post fire rangeland recovery following the Town Gulch and Coyote fires.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

6 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$530,441

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$530,441

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5019-24040

Project Type: Restoration_v2

Project Name: Post Fire Recovery and Restoration in Response to the Durkee and Thomspon Fire

Applicant: Tri-County CWMA

Region: Eastern Oregon

County: Baker

OWEB Request: $444,140

Total Cost: $2,679,598

Application Description The summer of 2024 was a record fire year for eastern Oregon with over 200,000 acres burned in Baker County alone. The largest fire in Baker County was the Durkee Fire, which burned a total of 294,265 acres in Baker and Malheur Counties. The fire was started by lightning at approximately 9:30 a.m. on July 17, 2024. While crews were battling the Durkee Fire, the Thompson Fire was started by lightning on July 22nd, 2024. The Thompson Fire burned a total of 18,393 acres just to the north of Durkee, Oregon.

Rural communities come together in a time of need, and this is certainly no exception. Even with resources pooling together, there is still a void between what is available and what is needed to overcome the loss and complete the necessary work. There is also a need for noxious weed awareness and management in post fire rehabilitation efforts. Wildfire is a known disturbance that will provide noxious weeds with an opportunity to establish, and compete against native species during post fire rehabilitation.

The Bureau of Land Management(BLM) has dedicated emergency stabilization and rehabilitation(ESR) funding for noxious weed treatment on federal lands within the fire boundaries and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has some funding available to private landowners for noxious weed control on private lands, however some ranchers may not qualify, or funding provided by NRCS may not be enough to cover the significant need that we expect in response to the fires. There is also a shortage of staff at NRCS who are able to provide technical assistance and expertise with invasive noxious weed control.

This project aims to provide funding to fill treatment gaps on private lands as well as provide technical assistance and coordination of all noxious weed control efforts in the project area. Project partners include Tri-County CWMA, BLM, NRCS, Baker County Weed Control, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and private landowners.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The restoration methods are clearly defined and appropriate to address broadleaf noxious weed and invasive annual grass establishment and prevent the introduction of tansy ragwort into Baker County, as well as reseeding and restoration effectiveness monitoring following the 2024 Durkee and Thomson fires.

- The proposed restoration approach is technically sound by implementing vegetation management strategies that are known to be effective and the restoration of dozer-built fire lines is a critical need for successful rangeland restoration.
- The proposed restoration is timely and will address actions identified in local, state, and federal sage-grouse recovery plans by restoring sage-steppe habitat essential to sage-grouse viability post-fire.
- Pre-fire the rangelands were in good condition and provided essential habitat for sage-grouse.
- The project builds on previous and current investments in the vicinity by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to improve sage-steppe habitat conditions both pre and post fire.
- The applicant has successfully built relationships with private landowners and public resource management agencies through a systematic approach to developing and implementing projects.
- The project team has the capacity to implement and maintain the project as proposed.
- NRCS may not have the capacity to serve all landowners in the fire-impacted area and will benefit from the project implementation and administrative support provided by Tri-County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA).
- The CWMA has a proven track record of managing and completing projects as proposed and according to the proposed schedule.
- The project costs are reasonable for the proposed vegetation management actions and staging the work from Durkee provides administrative cost efficiencies including seed and herbicide staging, as well as efficient contractor coordination.

Concerns

- No concerns were expressed during technical review.

Concluding Analysis

The CWMA proposes to enhance watershed resiliency and improve a variety of wildlife habitats through rangeland improvement actions in Baker County near Durkee. This will provide habitat benefit to native fish and wildlife, including sage grouse, and expedite post-fire rangeland recovery following the Durkee and Thomson fires.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$444,140

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$444,140

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5020-24041
Project Name: Phase 1: Camp Creek Wet Meadow and Aquatic Resiliency Project
Applicant: Trout Unlimited Inc
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $458,970

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Wallowa
Total Cost: $1,344,315

Application Description

The Camp Creek Wet Meadow and Aquatic Resiliency Project is located on The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) Zumwalt Prairie Preserve 17 miles northeast of Enterprise in Wallowa County, OR. TNC owns 90% of the Camp Creek watershed in its 33,000-acre ZPP and manages the land with strategies that integrate ecological restoration in a working landscape. Camp Creek is a tributary to Big Sheep Creek, which flows into the Imnaha River. Camp Creek is an important spawning and rearing habitat for ESA-listed Snake River steelhead, and designated critical habitat at its confluence with Big Sheep Creek for ESA-listed Snake River Chinook salmon and Mid-Columbia bull trout.

Due to historic human activities, Camp Creek is disconnected from its meadow and floodplain habitat and much of the upper basin is not functioning at its ecological potential, increasing its vulnerability to changing precipitation and temperature patterns. This is phase 1 of a comprehensive 4.7-mile project reach which will be completed in 2 construction phases. Phase 1 will enhance 2.8 miles of stream and 30 wetland acres along Camp Creek.

The project goal is to re-establish a connected river-wetland corridor in a degraded meadow system, restore floodplain function, enhance climate resilience, and encourage natural habitat forming processes for a biodiverse community of species. This meadow complex has the potential to support core habitat and corridors for species including bats, birds, elk, deer, cougar, bear, coyote, wolf, beaver, Columbia spotted frog, and ESA-listed steelhead.

The OR Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) uses Camp Creek as an index stream and has counted steelhead redds there since 1965. ODFW's counts show that Camp consistently produces the most or second greatest number of redds per stream mile in Wallowa County.

Project partners include Nez Perce Tribe, Grande Ronde Model Watershed Council, ODFW, RIVHAB, Trout Unlimited, and TNC.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The restoration methods are clearly defined and appropriate to re-establish a connected river-wetland corridor in a degraded meadow system, restore floodplain hydrology and function, enhance climate resilience, and encourage natural habitat forming processes for a biodiverse community of species in the Zumwalt Prairie near Enterprise.
- The photos, maps, and designs included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, proposed restoration components, and the value of the proposed work to restoring aquatic and floodplain habitat to benefit native fish and wildlife.
- Many restoration alternatives are identified in the application, and the applicant will implement an appropriate combination of those alternatives to achieve the restoration objectives.
- A post-restoration plan to treat noxious weeds, fencing that precludes domestic livestock, elk, and deer from accessing the restored area to facilitate vegetation recovery, and removal of a road located in the project area demonstrate proper project planning that will facilitate restoration success.
- The proposed restoration is a high priority for both state and federal fish management agencies and will address actions identified in local, state, and federal bull trout, Chinook salmon, and steelhead recovery plans by restoring aquatic habitat in the Imnaha watershed.
- The project builds on previous and extensive OWEB and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) investments to restore resident and anadromous fish migration, spawning, and rearing habitats in the Imnaha basin.
- Providing access to and restoring aquatic habitat addresses changing climate conditions and contributes to durable adaptation and resilience for ecosystems in the Zumwalt Prairie area.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project as proposed, on time, and according to the budget.
- The applicant is engaging appropriate partners and partner support is documented with letters of support, project design coordination and facilitation, and construction match included in the application.
- The project team has a consistent track record for implementing similar high-quality projects across northeast Oregon.
- The application budget includes details clearly describing project costs and the project will provide high watershed benefit for the cost.

Concerns

- No concerns were expressed during technical review.

Concluding Analysis

Trout Unlimited proposes to restore instream, riparian, and floodplain habitat on Camp Creek near Enterprise. The project will restore watershed function by extending available aquatic habitat for species of concern in Oregon as well as contribute to durable ecosystem resiliency to climate change impacts.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 15

Review Team Recommended Amount

$458,970

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$458,970

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5021-24042
Project Name: Gotta Suit Up and Deal With Suitter Creek
Applicant: Malheur WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $223,065

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $368,177

Application Description

1) This project is located 11 air miles from Brogan, OR, and 12 air miles from Ironside, OR.

2) The proposed project addresses post fire impacts from the 2024 Cow Valley Fire. Due to the intensity of the burn groundcover and riparian vegetation have been lost. Additionally, the soil was damaged in areas due to the intensity of the burn. It is anticipated that sediment laden, high flow events will likely occur in the watershed over the next several years. Previously this site had a very healthy ephemeral stream system the property demonstrated a balance of rangeland vegetation. Located in core sage-grouse habitat, cover and water systems such as Suitter Creek are vital.

3) We are proposing to:
-- Install 40 VPS
-- Plant 2500 large potted plants
-- Seed 1320 acre

4) Participants are the landowner, Resource Specialists Inc., NRCS, and Malheur WSC.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The photos, maps, and designs included in the application provide ample detail for understanding the project vicinity, the need for restoration actions, and the extent of the Cow Valley fire on the property.
- Buck-n-pole fencing around aspen stands on the property is demonstrated to be effective at protecting aspen from domestic livestock, elk, and deer browse and is likely to lead to aspen restoration on the property.
- The project builds on previous and extensive OWEB and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) investments to restore sage-steppe habitat and promote sage-grouse recovery in the vicinity.
- The proposed restoration is timely and will address actions identified in local, state, and federal sage-grouse recovery plans by restoring sage-steppe habitat essential to sage-grouse viability post fire.

- The Pre fire rangelands were in good condition and provided essential habitat for sage-grouse.
- The project team including the landowner, the SWCD, and the NRCS have relevant experience and a proven track record for implementing post-fire range management projects.
- The overall project cost is reasonable for the stated watershed health benefits.

Concerns

- The application has many project components, and it is difficult to understand how some of the objectives will be met. For example, the riparian exclusion fencing location and specifications are unclear, the rangeland seed mix mentioned in the application is not identified, and it is unclear when the NRCS seeding will occur, all of which make the likelihood of success uncertain.
- The restoration approach may not match the site conditions. For example, using potted plants in this arid setting without irrigation, away from a perennial flowing stream, or protected from browse is unlikely to result in an acceptable survival rate.
- The application lacks a grazing management plan needed to determine whether the project approach will achieve the proposed restoration objectives.

Concluding Analysis

The Malheur Watershed Council proposes to improve riparian and rangeland conditions post-fire by implementing sediment control efforts along one mile of Suiter Creek and seeding 1320-acres of rangeland following the 2024 Cow Valley fire. The project lacks several design detail elements, the application narrative does not clearly articulate the ecological benefits of the work, and a technical assistance phase that considers alternatives and post fire vegetation response may be more appropriate.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5022-23925

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2

Project Name: Uplifting Anthony Creek For Native Trout and Beaver Phase II: Environmental Clearances

Applicant: Powder Basin WC

Region: Eastern Oregon

County: Union

OWEB Request: $53,965

Total Cost: $56,965

Application Description The proposed project is located on a 1.5-mile reach of Anthony Creek, a tributary to the North Powder River within the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Elkhorn Wildlife Management Area, approximately 7.5 miles west of the community of North Powder, Oregon. Anthony Creek is occupied by several species of trout including native Bull Trout and Columbia Basin Redband Trout (CBRT) and non-native Brook Trout. The project reach is primarily utilized by CBRT and bull trout are documented to occupy Anthony Creek approximately two miles upstream from the project site. It is likely beaver occupied the reach historically, but their presence is not currently evident. Implementation of this project has potential to extend Bull Trout occupancy downstream to the project reach, which is a focus of the completed design. Documented water quality impairments include 303 (d) listings for temperature and E. coli bacteria in summer months. Habitat impairments for native trout include lack of instream habitat quantity and diversity and impaired fish passage. We propose to address limiting factors in Anthony Creek by implementing actions to improve livestock grazing management and in-channel restoration actions to: reconnect the incised stream with the historic floodplain; increase the number of quality pools; increase the loading of large wood material in the channel and encourage beaver recolonization. We will expand the existing riparian buffer fence. Through an existing OWEB TA grant (223-5018-22501), engineered project designs have been completed. Additional funds are needed to complete cultural resource permitting, removal-fill permitting, fish passage approval, land use approval and Bull Trout ESA consultation. ODFW funded a substantial amount of the project design and will provide in-kind for this next phase of the project by formal submittal of a completed cultural resource pedestrian survey (Survey Report) and review of the other permitting documents.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application is a continuation of previous design and environmental compliance work and describes a clear need for additional resources to acquire all permitting and consultation documents for a planned restoration project.
- The resulting restoration will improve riparian, floodplain, and instream habitats for bull trout, redband trout, and beaver in Anthony Creek on property managed by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).

- The application is clearly written with sequential objectives and has descriptive photos.
- The proposed approach is appropriate and includes a site investigation, an alternatives analysis, design review intervals at 30%, 60%, and 90%, and the acquisition of necessary construction permits.
- The level of survey, design, and engineering described in the application is necessary to substantiate and obtain all permits required for restoration work in Anthony Creek and the adjacent floodplain.
- The resulting design will lead to a restoration project that addresses elevated stream temperature and bacteria concentrations in Anthony Creek, which are identified as limiting factors in the Powder Basin TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load).
- An experienced team, including the Powder Basin Watershed Council, ODFW wildlife area management staff, ODFW habitat restoration staff, and contractual engineering assistance, have the capacity to manage and implement the design and permitting work as proposed.
- Costs in the budget align with the proposed work.

Concerns

- It is unclear how the resulting design will address non-native brook trout in the project reach. Brook trout hybridize with native bull trout, which impacts the viability of this species, and the resulting restoration may not lead to bull trout recovery in Anthony Creek.

Concluding Analysis

The Powder Basin Watershed Council proposes to complete all permitting requirements for a project addressing degraded aquatic, floodplain, and riparian habitat on Anthony Creek near North Powder. The resulting restoration guided by this work will occur in bull trout and redband trout habitat, restore habitat necessary for beaver colonization, and guide future restoration that addresses identified TMDL concerns.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 2

Review Team Recommended Amount

$53,965

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$53,965

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5023-24037
Project Name: Some Blowouts Never Stop
Applicant: Malheur WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $101,365

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Malheur
Total Cost: $107,365

Application Description

1) The project is located on Willow Spring Creek 0.75 miles north of Harper and 1 mile from the confluence with the Malheur River.

2) A record high flow event caused significant damage to Willow Spring Creek in 2017. There is a several headcut and the banks are 10+ feet. There is significant continued erosion which is contributing to the poor water quality in the Malheur River.

The landowner is interested in restoring the stream channel, treating weeds, and restoring the native vegetation.

3) The project will conduct a field survey, hydrologic analysis, develop alternatives, and a final design from the selected alternatives.

In addition to the stream work, we will develop a plan for controlling weeds, and planting desirable riparian vegetation. The riparian vegetation will attract all forms of wildlife, include the Monarch Butterfly.

According to the Xerces Society (2018) the number of monarchs has declined by 95% in North America since the 1980s. Their risk of extinction is between 72% and 86% (Shultz et al., 2017). According to the USFWS' Monarch mapper the insect does frequent the area.

4) Partners are the landowner, Malheur WSC, RSI engineering, and design reviewers.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application describes a clear need for designing a project that will reduce bank erosion and channel down cutting on Willow Spring Creek, a tributary to the Malheur River near Harper.
- The proposed design work is technically sound, utilizing professionally accepted approaches including a topographic survey, hydrologic analysis, and an alternatives analysis to determine the most effective method for erosion control.

- Willow Spring Creek is a stream subject to extreme high flows and the soils in the area are highly erodible. This technical assistance application describes a reasonable approach to determine the most effective restoration method at the project site.
- The applicant has the organizational capacity to implement the project as proposed and the project team is qualified to accomplish the proposed activities.
- The landowner is new to the property, is engaged in land conservation, and the resulting restoration may lead to future restoration opportunities in the area.
- Appropriate partners are engaged with the design effort, including the watershed council, state and federal agency design reviewers, the landowner, and an experienced design consultant.
- Project costs align with the work necessary to accomplish the project actions.

Concerns

- It is unclear how the resulting design will address the frequent high flows, highly erodible conditions, and land management higher in the watershed that may compromise future restoration actions.

Concluding Analysis

The Malheur Watershed Council is proposing to design a stream restoration and erosion control project on Willow Spring Creek, a tributary to the Malheur River. The resulting restoration will improve stream function, riparian vegetation, floodplain connectivity, and water quality, which will benefit native fish, wildlife, and their habitats in Malheur County.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 2

Review Team Recommended Amount

$101,365

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$101,365

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Eastern Oregon (Region 5)

Application Name: 225-5024-23999
Project Name: Powder Basin Engagement Phase II
Applicant: Powder Basin WC
Region: Eastern Oregon
OWEB Request: $131,720

Project Type: Engagement_v2
County: Baker
Total Cost: $142,700

Application Description This project will engage private landowners, government agencies, and organizations in the Powder Basin to support project development in 2 areas: watershed function and fish passage/aquatic habitat improvements (phase II of engagement work described in OWEB 222-5049), and aquatic habitat improvements identified in phase I of the PBWC's "Fish the Powder" project (OWEB 220-5023).

Phase II engagement for OWEB 222-5049 includes 3 focus areas: 1. Pine Valley portion of the Pine Creek watershed, 2. Powder River, Eagle Creek tributary, and all tributaries upstream of Jimmy Creek, 3. Burnt River and all tributaries upstream of/including Camp Creek. Community engagement will foster project development in beaver restoration and stream function improvements, irrigation system modernization, and fish passage improvements. These actions are imperative for building basin-wide resiliency to climate change impacts including decreased snowpack, changes in seasonal flow, and increased frequency and severity of drought/wildfire.

The "Fish the Powder" focus area is the Powder River from Mason Dam to Hughes Ln in Baker City. Engagement will address restoration strategies from phase I to improve aquatic habitat for Columbia Basin redband trout and fishing on the Powder River. Strategies include identifying opportunities to improve fish passage, recreation access, instream habitat, and stream function. Engagement will address community concerns presented to the council in 2018 sparking the original project. Addressing these concerns will further community trust in the council and relationships for future project development.

We will use personal contacts, booths at local events, our newsletter (The Thalweg), development and directed mailings of informational brochures, and in-the-field project tours/workshops to engage with our community in the development of the restoration opportunities listed above. Partners include Idaho Power Company (IPC) and the Powder Basin community.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The engagement methods are clearly defined and appropriate to increase the pace and scale of irrigation water management, fish habitat improvement, and beaver habitat restoration in Baker County.
- Engagement is needed in the Powder River Basin to work towards strategic restoration that increases watershed resiliency, including improving irrigation water management, fish habitat, and beaver influenced habitat restoration.
- The work will increase the pace and scale of restoration, lead to water quality improvements, and contribute to addressing the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) TMDL priorities in Baker County, as well as implement the council's strategic action plan.
- Future restoration expected to result from the proposed engagement will be strategically located in Baker County and implement actions identified in local and regional watershed planning documents.
- The proposed engagement is timely by building on current restoration momentum in Baker County and complementing ongoing fish passage, aquatic habitat, and irrigation system improvement work.
- The applicant has the leadership capacity and technical skills to implement the project as proposed.
- A diverse partnership of local, state, and federal agencies, as well as the Baker County community, demonstrates cost effectiveness by leveraging partner resources.

Concerns

- No concerns were expressed at review.

Concluding Analysis

The Powder Basin Watershed Council proposes to increase water conservation, beaver restoration, and fish habitat restoration efforts in Baker County through engagement. The Council has the capacity to implement the work through direct contact, field tours, and their newsletter. The likelihood of the engagement project to succeed is high and the resulting restoration work will lead to increased watershed resiliency.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 1

Review Team Recommended Amount

$131,720

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$131,720

Staff Conditions

N/A

Mid-Columbia - Region 6 Fall 2024 Funding Recommendations

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Funding Recommendation

- Staff Recommendation For Funding (SRF)
- Below Funding Line (BFL)

Previous Grants 1998 - Spring 2024

- Land Acquisition
- Restoration
- Region 6 Cities
- Region 6 Streams
- OWEB Region 6 Boundary

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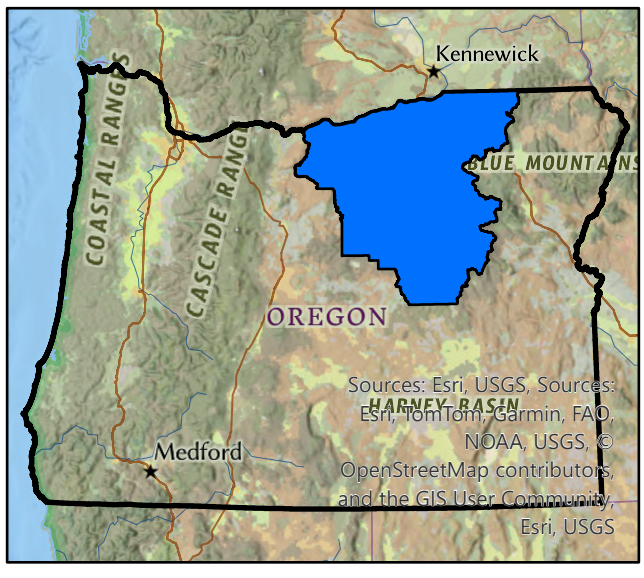

Region 6 - Mid-Columbia Basin Restoration

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-6003	Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation	Couse Creek RM 8 Low-Tech Restoration	The project goal is to create a healthy and resilient riverscape that supports ecological function and provides high quality tributary habitat for the Walla Walla River steelhead population. Restoration objectives are to: - Increase in-channel complexity by diversifying geomorphic unit assemblages - Increase channel floodplain connectivity - Increase perennial surface flow extent and duration - Increase wetland and riparian vegetation extent - Increase wood accumulations	$ 161,971
225-6007	Blue Mountain Land Trust	Phipps Meadow - Upland Restoration	The goals are to implement priority upland management activities. These activities are meant to improve forest health, reduce wildfire risk to the property and surrounds, reduce invasive species establishment, and to restore and diversify priority upland habitats for wildlife benefit. Timely funding would allow aligning the timing of this work to provide needed material for meadow restoration. We also desire to establish long-term roles for volunteer/public engagement in restoration work.	$ 155,210
225-6009	North Fork John Day WC	Eightmile Creek Restoration Phase 2	Increase quality salmonid habitat and water retention by increasing the number of pools, returning sinuosity and floodplain connection, increasing the amount of wood in the stream, reversing channel incision, and reducing flow velocity and periodicity. Increase steelhead spawning habitat by installing structures that will facilitation aggradation of spawning gravels.	$ 150,807
225-6001	South Fork John Day WC	Abbott Watershed Enhancements	Create resilient upland habitat in the Abbott watershed.	$ 157,105
225-6005	Mid John Day WC	Thompson Creek Watershed Improvement 2	Address forest health and watershed function issues in the Thompson Creek watershed.	$ 245,705
225-6011	North Fork John Day WC	Ritter Post Fire Recovery: Phase 1	Address wildfire impacts over 2,195 acres of private land in the Eightmile Creek watershed by implementing post-fire recovery restoration to restore native upland plant communities and minimize post fire erosion and runoff.	$ 306,292
225-6010	Wheeler SWCD	Rowe Creek Watershed Recover for Resilience	The goal of this project is to improve upland processes and function by recovering from past management and catastrophic events to create resilient landscapes. Promoting fire resilience, reducing juniper encroachment, improving grazing managment, and protecting rare and declining habitats will improve and enhance health in the Rowe Creek Watershed.	$ 189,000
225-6002	Mid John Day WC	Pine Creek Forestry Improvement	Improve watershed conditions in Pine Creek.	$ 191,570
Total Restoration Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 1,557,660**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
N/A				

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
225-6004	Wheeler SWCD	Bringing Deadhorse Back To Life	$ 197,141
225-6006	Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation	NFWWR 5.2-6.5 Construction	$ 388,175
225-6008	Wheeler SWCD	Crispy to Cozy Rangeland Recovery	$ 690,283

Region 6 - Mid-Columbia Basin Technical Assistance

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-6013	South Fork John Day WC	BARK Aquatic Organism Passage Phase 1	Provide a significant ~5 miles of additional access for Mid-Columbia River Steelhead, Juvenile Chinook Salmon, and resident Redband Trout, of critical habitat in the South Fork John Day River Watershed, through partnership with Grant SWCD and Malheur National Forest.	$ 169,713
225-6015	Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation	Couse Creek RM 7 Restoration Design	The project goal is to produce a construction-ready design describing restoration treatments to improve spawning and rearing conditions for steelhead in Couse Creek. Restoration actions will jump-start physical processes that initiate a self-sustaining positive feedback loop to create hydraulic and geomorphic diversity, increase sediment sorting, improve retention of flow and fine sediments on the floodplain, and encourage riparian vegetation growth.	$ 92,197
Total Technical Assistance Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 261,910**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
225-6012	Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation	North Fork Walla Walla River Design RM 6.5 - 7.7	Develop the most effective final holistic design package for the purpose of re-establishing and self-maintaining proper riverine processes and function for optimal ecosystem balance and ecological benefit.	$ 139,319
225-6018	Monument SWCD	Birch Creek Headwaters	The goal of the proposed project is to create a plan to protect and enhance riparian and upland habitats across a 400 acre property situated within the headwaters of 7 small catchments that drain into 3 larger watersheds using fencing, spring developments, and forest management practices.	$ 31,086
225-6017	North Fork John Day WC	Tamarack Creek Culvert Design	Obtain engineered design to replace a under sized culvert on Tamarack Creek, decrease scour/erosion at the site, and address habitat limiting factors such as altered hydrology, altered sediment routing, and impaired water quality.	$ 27,488

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Amount Requested
225-6019	Wheeler SWCD	Precision in Every Decision - Greater Waterman Planning TA	$ 264,623

Region 6 - Mid-Columbia Basin Engagement

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Recommended
225-6020	Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation	Connecting Communities to Watershed Health: Collaborative Restoration in the Walla Walla Basin	To develop and implement restoration projects that address critical hydrological and ecological issues within the Walla Walla River Basin by engaging stakeholders, building partnerships, utilizing digital tools like ArcGIS Story Maps, and enhancing online outreach through the updated WWBWC website to promote watershed health and climate resilience.	$ 87,184
Total Engagement Projects Recommended for Funding by RRT and OWEB Staff				**$ 87,184**

Projects Recommended but NOT FUNDED in Priority Order

Project #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Goal (From Application)	Amount Requested
N/A				

Projects *NOT RECOMMENDED* for Funding by RRT			
Project #	**Grantee**	**Project Title**	**Amount Requested**
N/A			

Region 6 Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board Award	**$1,906,754**

Region 1 - 6 Grand Total OWEB Staff Recommended Board	**$13,355,571**

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6001-23927
Project Name: Abbott Watershed Enhancements
Applicant: South Fork John Day WC
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $157,105

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Grant
Total Cost: $249,315

Application Description This project is located in the Upper South Fork John Day River, in the Abbott Watershed on the Keerins Ranch. This project area has been prioritized due to the location being in critical mule deer and elk winter range, as well as complimenting recent OWEB proposals (218-6005, 219-6015, 220-6014, and 224-6021), South Fork John Day Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) through NRCS. This will continue to build upon headwaters, watershed scale restoration across multiple ownerships.

The Keerins Ranch is systematically working on restoration efforts across their entire ranch, watershed by watershed. In a previously funded OWEB grant #: 220-6014, complimenting NRCS EQIP and RCPP funding, the Brisbois watershed was enhanced. We are working East on the Ranch to pair the work done through RCPP to develop 3 upland water sources, and provide grazing management through pasture division fencing, and work done through EQIP to protect 2 aspen stands. We are requesting support in order to remove 300 acres of Juniper from the watershed, that is encroaching into the meadow and aspen stands. Project partners include SFJDWC, NRCS, and the Keerins Ranch.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application is clear and describes the resource need and opportunity for the 300-acre juniper removal where it is encroaching on aspen and meadow habitats. The effort builds on previous projects with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Resource Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) project in the South Fork John Day.
- The proposed project is located in critical winter range for mule deer and elk in the South Fork John Day watershed and will address habitat improvement recommendations in the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Mule Deer Management Plan.
- The project is ready for implementation with a technically sound approach and permits in place.
- The proposed project will focus on phase I juniper growth, which has a high impact given the small size of trees and understory vegetation consisting of native shrubs and grasses.

- Grazing and juniper management plans were included in the application that describe how these will be managed during and post project.
- The applicant uses a prioritization tool to focus juniper removal efforts, which is a technically sound approach that identifies projects based on juniper phase, elevation, slope, aspect, proximity to roads, and location of sage grouse and mule deer winter range habitat.
- The landowner is actively engaged in restoration and the proposed juniper removal leverages previous investment with adjacent RCPP thinning projects completed by the landowner.
- Applicant has experience implementing similar projects and the landowner has participated in multiple conservation projects in the past.

Concerns

- NRCS RCPP project components such as the spring developments and aspen protection/pasture fencing details are not clearly described in the application. For example, the description of fencing materials and specifications.

Concluding Analysis

The South Fork John Day Watershed Council proposes upland restoration in the upper South Fork John Day River watershed by removing 300 acres of encroaching juniper to protect critical mule deer and elk winter range. The proposed effort complements recent OWEB and NRCS funded efforts to develop upland water sources, improve grazing management, and protect aspen stands.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$157,105

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$157,105

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6002-23982
Project Name: Pine Creek Forestry Improvement
Applicant: Mid John Day WC
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $191,570

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Wheeler
Total Cost: $240,084

Application Description The project is located in the Pine Creek watershed in northwestern Wheeler County. The watershed drains to the John Day River near Clarno.
Like much of Central and Eastern Oregon, this area has been inundated with western juniper and faces threats from annual grass invasions as well. Western juniper encroachment disrupts the plant and animal communities as well as the hydrologic cycle. Overstocked forests present multiple watershed health issues. Use of proper management practices such as pre-commercial thinning will result in a more resilient landscape, with healthier trees and understory species. Healthier forest stands are more resilient to impacts from climate change like drought, disease, and insects, and are less vulnerable to catastrophic wildfire. Limiting factors in this watershed include water quantity and quality. Conservation work, primarily juniper removal, has been completed on Pine Creek Properties over the last ten years through three previous OWEB restoration grants and previous pre-commercial thinning has been completed by the landowner. Additional work on neighboring properties includes the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation's Pine Creek Conservation Area and Bar U Ranch.
This project includes pre-commercially thin 135 acres of mixed conifer forest, remove 30 acres of western juniper, 10 acres of weed treatment, reseed 10 acres of disturbed ground.
Project partners include Pine Creek Properties, LLC, Oregon Department of Forestry, Mid John Day Watershed Council, and OWEB.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by including details identifying streams on the included maps and describing watershed context, including project proximity with similar forestry projects completed on adjacent properties. A forestry management plan is included in the proposed actions and budget.

- The proposed project leverages three completed OWEB projects, demonstrating a history of restoration and continuing established activities like juniper removal, weed treatment, and spring developments.

- Mastication will be used to break down material from the juniper removal and pre-commercial thinning instead of leaving piles. This will prevent the spread of beetles that will over winter in the piles and spread to healthy trees in the spring.

- The project benefits will leverage efforts in the adjacent Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs' Pine Creek Conservation Area where upland restoration has been occurring.
- The landowner is engaged in implementing actions that reduce fire risk and support is demonstrated by a match contribution.
- The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) partner support is demonstrated by the letter included in the application.
- The Watershed Council has the experience and capacity to implement the proposed restoration actions.

Concerns

- The application provides a generalized description of the watershed problem, which lacks sufficient technical detail needed to better understand current forest conditions at the project site.
- Historic fire suppression is listed as a stressor that led to current conditions, but there is no mention of how land management practices will change or how the proposed juniper removal will be used to address impacts of fire suppression in the long term .

Concluding Analysis

The Mid-John Day Watershed Council proposes to address western juniper encroachment and overstocked forests in the Pine Creek watershed, both of which degrade watershed health and increase wildfire risk. Building on past OWEB-funded restoration and actions implemented by neighboring properties, like the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the project will pre-commercially thin mixed conifer, remove juniper, treat weeds, and reseed disturbed areas. The project demonstrates a commitment to watershed health and a well-thought-out approach to weed management.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund with Conditions

Review Team Priority

8 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$191,570

Review Team Conditions

Recommend with Conditions: ODF Forest Management Plan and approved ODF notification of operation is required prior to first payment.

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund Increased

Staff Recommended Amount

$191,570

Staff Conditions

Recommend with Conditions: ODF Forest Management Plan and approved ODF notification of operation is required prior to first payment.

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6003-23990
Project Name: Couse Creek RM 8 Low-Tech Restoration
Applicant: Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $161,971

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Umatilla
Total Cost: $243,733

Application Description The project will implement restoration treatments throughout 1.5 miles (RM 7.5-9) of Couse Creek, a tributary that flows into the Walla Walla River near Milton-Freewater, OR. Tributary habitat is limited in the Walla Walla Basin, and restoration actions in the project reach will improve spawning and rearing habitat for Mid-Columbia Steelhead. Couse Creek is listed in regional steelhead recovery plans as a primary spawning area for the Walla Walla River population. Limiting factors include stream temperature, sediment homogeneity, low frequency of wood, and reduced duration of seasonal surface flows. The project design was completed in 2024 and describes construction of approximately 150 structures intended to jumpstart riverscape processes that will increase aquatic habitat complexity, floodplain connectivity, and support riparian vegetation. The long-term objective is to improve conditions for steelhead in Couse Creek by providing refugia for juveniles, enhancing spawning conditions for adults, and decreasing stranding mortalities due to thermal barriers and dry stream reaches. Project partners include the Bonneville Power Administration, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council, and the landowner who owns Couse Creek property from River Miles 7-9.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The scope of work is clearly described and the low-tech process-based restoration approach on 1.5 miles of Couse Creek is technically sound and appropriate for the project reach.
- The project benefits multiple species, including Chinook salmon, ESA-listed Mid-Columbia steelhead, and bull trout. Chinook salmon usage and significant steelhead spawning have been documented through habitat surveys.
- The proposed restoration will address actions identified in plans, such as the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Steelhead Conservation and Recovery Plan and Couse Creek Watershed Assessment and Action Plan, by promoting habitat complexity and enhancing riparian function.
- The project builds on previous OWEB funded projects in Couse Creek, including the Couse Creek Assessment, passage projects at the confluence and River Mile (RM) 3, low-tech process-based restoration on RM 4, and the technical assistance design for the proposed restoration on RM 8.

- Instream water rights in Couse Creek have been conserved for fish and wildlife; stream flows are protected through the property down to the mouth of Couse Creek.
- The project is in an Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Strategic Implementation Area (SIA), which is focused on improving water quality by addressing pollutants. The proposed project will benefit the SIA by leveraging investments to improve water quality.
- The landowner has implemented light grazing on the property; however, they are committed to livestock exclusion of the project area until the site matures and stabilizes.
- The applicant has implemented similar projects and the organization has a proven track record delivering on grant commitments.

Concerns

- No concerns identified.

Concluding Analysis

The proposed project will implement low-tech process-based restoration across 1.5 miles of Couse Creek, a spawning tributary for ESA-listed Mid-Columbia steelhead, addressing critical habitat limitations within the Walla Walla Basin. Utilizing an OWEB funded design, approximately 150 structures will be constructed to improve habitat complexity and floodplain connectivity to reduce fish stranding mortalities and enhance spawning conditions. The project builds on the Couse Creek Watershed Assessment and past restoration to create a more resilient and productive habitat.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$161,971

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$161,971

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6004-24010
Project Name: Bringing Deadhorse Back To Life
Applicant: Wheeler SWCD
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $197,141

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Wheeler
Total Cost: $305,361

Application Description 1)This project is located in the northeast portion of Wheeler County, approximately 10 miles north of the town of Spray, Oregon (Map 1). The project falls in the Kahler Creek Watershed (HUC10 - 1707020401), within Kahler Basin where Deadhorse Creek leaves the Umatilla National Forest and enters privately owned property. 2) Currently, Deadhorse has terraced floodplains and vigorous fields adjacent to the riparian corridor filled with native bunchgrass communities, however, years of fire suppression have resulted in Western juniper engulfing the uplands, increasing encroachment and the extent of annual grass establishment throughout the lower regions of the fields (Map 5). This has created the loss of native vegetation and overall degraded the forage production for livestock and habitat for terrestrial wildlife (Map 4). Deadhorse Creek is not ESA listed, but plays a vital role in water quality, quantity, and wildlife habitat as it is a direct tributary to Kahler Creek, a perennial ESA listed stream. 3) This project seeks to restore herbaceous vegetation and watershed function to more optimal conditions benefitting agricultural operations and terrestrial wildlife; and, indirectly benefitting aquatic species. The project proposes to remove 243 acres of juniper removal (203 acres mechanical, 40 acres hand cut), broadcast seed disturbed areas within the juniper treatment areas, develop 2 springs and install 3 600-gallon troughs to improve water quality and quantity for grazing distribution and wildlife use, install 3,349 feet of stream protection fencing, and implement a series of CREP practices within Deadhorse Creek. Project partners include OWEB, FSA, Wheeler SWCD, and the landowner.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by including details identifying locations for juniper removal and spring development, an explanation of how areas were prioritized for juniper treatment, and additional information compiled by Wheeler SWCD that demonstrates there are water rights associated with the proposed activities.
- The proposed project addresses limiting factors affecting fish and wildlife in the Kahler Creek watershed by removing encroaching juniper, seeding, installing spring developments, and implementing grazing management.
- Riparian restoration in the Kahler Creek watershed is likely to improve water quality benefiting aquatic species.

- The project scope aligns with priority actions identified in the John Day Basin Partnership's Upland Prioritization for the Kahler Creek watershed.
- Landowner project support is demonstrated by a letter included in the application.
- The applicant has demonstrated capacity to accomplish the project goals and has implemented similar projects.

Concerns

- The application lacks details needed to evaluate whether the proposed spring development is technically sound and site appropriate, including hydrology calculations for the expected spring output and site-specific design details with information about trough locations, elevation, and animal use. Also, grazing management information is needed to understand whether the project will be successful in achieving landowner goals along with the expected rangeland health ecological outcomes.
- The application lacks specific details on the protection of the spring source, relying on generalized statements. For example, the structure and type of fencing for the spring box, including wildlife benefits.
- It is unclear whether appropriate technical expertise is engaged in the project; for example, a licensed engineer to review and approve the spring development.
- The application lacks detail for riparian flash grazing within the riparian fence to determine if the restoration investment will be protected.

Concluding Analysis

Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation District proposes to restore degraded uplands and improve watershed function in the Kahler Creek Watershed. Years of fire suppression have led to juniper encroachment and annual grass invasion, diminishing forage and wildlife habitat. The project will remove juniper, seed disturbed areas, develop springs, install troughs and fencing, and implement CREP practices to address limiting factors for both terrestrial and aquatic species. However, the application lacks details necessary to evaluate the technical soundness of proposed methods and the potential ecological benefits to fish and wildlife habitat.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6005-24013
Project Name: Thompson Creek Watershed Improvement 2
Applicant: Mid John Day WC
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $245,705

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Wheeler
Total Cost: $470,033

Application Description This project is located in the Thompson Creek watershed in southwest Wheeler County. Thompson Creek is an important tributary in the Bridge Creek Watershed. Western Juniper encroachment and overstocked forests have contributed to degraded watershed health and pose a risk factor for high intensity wildfires. These conditions are causing the forest stands to be more susceptible to mistletoe, western pine beetle, Douglas fir beetle, and Ips beetle.
Previous upland projects funded by OWEB have removed 933 western juniper on the property to the north of this project area. In 2022, OWEB awarded funds for Grant # 222-6008 Thompson Creek Watershed Improvement that was completed in Spring 2024. That project proposed to remove 840 acres of western juniper and pre-commercially thin 100. After closer inspection, it was determined that pre-commercial thinning was the best action on approximately 450 acres so the landowner contributed additional funds to complete those acres. The landowner has also worked with NRCS and the Oregon Department of Forestry to develop a forest plan. This project will pre-commercially thin 148 acres of mixed forest. These acres are to the east and west of 169 acres of pre-commercial thinning that is being funded by NRCS. In addition this application requests funds for 10 acres for reseeding disturbed areas. Project partners are OWEB, Oregon Department of Forestry, the landowner, and NRCS.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The maps and treatment prescription provided in the application clearly describe the project scope.
- The project will implement appropriate actions outlined in a forest management plan approved by the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and addresses key limiting factors by removing encroaching junipers, pre-commercial thinning mixed conifer, and re-seeding disturbed areas.
- Livestock will be excluded for 1-2 years in the proposed treatment areas to allow time for reseeded areas to establish.
- The proposed project is building on previous OWEB funded upland restoration projects on the property.
- The proposed forest treatments are technically sound by addressing areas with disease, focusing on the uplands in higher elevation zones and moving down slope.

- The landowner is engaged and is interested in using the property as an example for how conservation projects can occur on private lands to benefit land use, fish and wildlife, and water quality.
- A diversity of partners support the project, and their involvement is demonstrated by letters of support and match contribution.
- Costs in the budget align with the proposed actions.

Concerns

- No concerns identified.

Concluding Analysis

The Thompson Creek watershed, a key tributary of Bridge Creek in Wheeler County, suffers from degraded upland health due to juniper encroachment and overstocked forests that increase wildfire and disease risks. Building on prior OWEB-funded juniper removal and thinning projects in the area, the Mid-John Day Watershed Council proposes to pre-commercially thin 148 acres of mixed forest, complementing ongoing Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) funded efforts.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

5 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$245,705

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$245,705

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6006-24019
Project Name: NFWWR 5.2-6.5 Construction
Applicant: Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $388,175

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Umatilla
Total Cost: $830,509

Application Description Prior phase won award! 2024 State Land Board Restoration (OWEB-funded)

1) The North Fork Walla Walla River (NFWWR) is an 18-mile long tributary of the Walla Walla River that enters near RM 52, Milton Freewater, Oregon. The 1.3-mile reach to be constructed is River Mile (RM) 5.2-6.5.

2) The NFWWR is described in the Walla Walla Sub Basin Plan as both a priority protection and restoration area and 303D list for high water temperature. The NFWWR was severely impacted by the 100+-year flood of February 2020, the largest on record. WWBWC staff conducted Aquatic Habitat Inventory surveys on the NFWWR in July 2020 to document the pre-project status of physical habitat and identify physical habitat deficiencies. Mid-Columbia Steelhead and bull trout inhabit the project area and listed as ESA-Threatened with populations declining and status trending towards the high risk of extinction.

3) The construction process will use engineered final designs paid for by BPA to implement the most appropriate and effective treatments afield for sustainable, long term benefit and floodplain function. Construction techniques will compliment holistic watershed attributes and address causes, not symptom of deficiencies identified in inventory assessments. Resiliency will be built into structural configurations to mitigate impacts from headwater logging operations & climate change, both essential drivers of hydrological characteristics. Salmonid suitability and habitat connectivity are objectives of the project and vital during catastrophic events, resulting in the "take" of ESA salmonids due to elevated water temperature, habitat degradation, and turbidity at lethal levels. Construction timeline estimated for 2025 or 26 as part of a 5-mile, 5-year restoration plan.

4) The project has support from; landowners, USFWS, ODFW, BPA, OWEB, OWRD, CTUIR, NMFS, donors, other interested parties. Project performance will be gaged via WWBWC's effectiveness monitoring, funded by OWEB.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project will address significant impacts along 1.3-miles on the North Fork Walla Walla River from the 2020 flood of record.
- The proposed project is in the appropriate location on the North Fork Walla Walla to address limiting factors impacting fish habitat.
- The proposed phase continues successful implementation of multiple restoration projects along the North Fork Walla Walla, including spring reconnections and construction of restoration on River Mile 3.6-5.2.
- The applicant has experience implementing similar projects.

Concerns

- Actions outlined in the application are not described with enough detail to understand if the project is likely to succeed.
- The project is at 30% design; there is not enough detail in the application to determine whether the approach is technically sound. For example, it is unclear how the large wood structures will be built.
- The grazing plan lacks detail to determine if the restoration investment will be protected.

Concluding Analysis

The 2020 flood severely impacted the North Fork Walla Walla, causing channel avulsion, erosion, and sediment transport issues, which are exacerbated by past anthropogenic alterations and ineffective flood control measures. The stream lacks off-channel habitats and natural recovery processes due to a history of levee construction and woody debris removal, impacting salmonid habitat. The project will restore the channel's natural function by adding large wood and boulders, reconnecting off-channel habitats, and addressing riparian function through planting that eventually will mitigate temperature and turbidity issues. However, the application lacks clarity and details needed to understand how project components will be implemented.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6007-24036
Project Name: Phipps Meadow - Upland Restoration
Applicant: Blue Mountain Land Trust
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $155,210

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Grant
Total Cost: $213,226

Application Description Phipps Meadow is a 279-acre property in Grant County, Oregon, 18 miles east of Prairie City. It encompasses 1.58 miles of the headwaters of the Middle Fork John Day River and 108-acres of surrounding wet meadow. These headwaters contain critical habitat for several OWEB-listed species including bull trout, Columbia River steelhead, west-slope cutthroat, and spring-run Chinook salmon. The property also contains 171 acres of upland habitats, including mixed conifer forest, pine woodland, and Big Sagebrush Steppe.

BMLT acquired Phipps Meadow in 2021 with support from an OWEB Land Acquisition Grant, through the John Day Basin Partnership (JDBP) Focused Investment Partnership (FIP). The property is now under a Conservation Easement held by OWEB.

Separate meadow restoration planning is underway to improve floodplain function and aquatic habitats in the meadow. This is a collaborative effort involving several JDBP partners. The meadow restoration design is 30% complete, with implementation expected in 2026.

Upland environments on the property require restoration treatments to improve forest health, mitigate fire and climate vulnerability, and improve habitat conditions for associated upland species.

BMLT proposes implementing priority upland actions, including 45 acres of mechanical thinning, 24 acres of hand thin/pile burn, 10 acres of invasive annual grass control, and staff-supported volunteer stewardship of remaining upland priorities. These upland restoration actions will complement and enhance the meadow and river restoration plans, increasing the ecological uplift of the entire property.

A unique opportunity exists to align the timing of priority upland treatments with meadow restoration. Specifically, recommended thinning can supply much of the material needed for meadow restoration features like habitat wood, beaver-dam analogues, and exclosure fencing, forming a holistic and carbon-conscious restoration approach.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application has clear objectives, deliverables, and tasks outlined for implementing upland management activities.
- The application demonstrates an understanding of the landscape, the ecological benefits of the proposed restoration, and how future meadow restoration fits into the overall property goals of improving forest health, reducing wildfire risk, reducing invasive species, and diversifying upland habitat for wildlife.
- The proposed upland restoration is high priority for partners in the area and is prioritized with the Southern Blues Partners.
- Lack of large snags is a habitat limiting factor for a range of priority avian and mammal species present or more likely to be present at Phipps Meadow.
- The project location is a conservation property acquired by Blue Mountain Land Trust and is adjacent to public lands that offers connectivity for wildlife and fuels treatment.
- The applicant has the capacity and technical skills to implement the project. Volunteers are active with the organization and will be involved in the project by implementing appropriate restoration activities.
- Project costs are reasonable for the proposed actions, in part due to the active volunteer support.

Concerns

- No concerns identified.

Concluding Analysis

Blue Mountain Land Trust (BMLT) is proposing upland restoration on Phipps Meadow, a 279-acre property with the headwaters of the Middle Fork John Day River. BMLT acquired the property with an OWEB acquisition grant in 2021. The property supports critical mule deer habitat identified in the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Mule Deer Management Plan. The proposed project includes mechanical and hand thinning, invasive grass control, and volunteer stewardship, aligning with future meadow restoration to create a watershed scale approach.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$155,210

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$155,210

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6008-24038
Project Name: Crispy to Cozy Rangeland Recovery
Applicant: Wheeler SWCD
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $690,283

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Wheeler
Total Cost: $1,415,039

Application Description 1) This project is within the Butte Creek and Service Creek Watersheds, located in the uplands adjacent to Big Service Creek, a ESH listed stream. 2) The Service Fire (Fossil Complex), which started on September 5, 2024, burned nearly 24,000 acres across private land within three watersheds - Butte Creek (1707020405), Service Creek (1707020402), and Thirtymile Creek (1707020408). The fire burned through forest stands of mature Ponderosa pine and mixed conifer species, rangelands, and juniper that have been fueled by years of fire suppression, drought conditions, and climate change. This resulted in thousands of acres becoming bare, exposing soils and decreasing the stability, timber stands left with standing dead and broken logs, and massive piles of downed wood debris that includes trunks, limbs and branches. This particular private property has lost thousands of acres, in conjunction to livestock, grazing availability, and timber putting a long-term strain on the ecological recovery of this landscape. Due to the barren landscape soil erosion and water quality are critical concerns within this project. 3) This project proposes restoration activities to support water quality, reduce fuels, decrease the opportunity of invasive annual grass establishment, and overall assist the landscape in soil stability to decrease severe high water runoff events. This project will implement 392 acres of Woody Residue Treatment in conjunction with 232 acres of Forest Stand Improvement, aerial seed 1,890 acres within NRCS identified post-fire recovery seeding priority zone, and develop one spring for livestock water. 4) Project partners include OWEB, Wheeler SWCD, NRCS, ODF, and the landowner.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Falling trees along elevation contours is a sound technique for erosion control and aerial seeding is an appropriate strategy for the post-fire landscape condition.
- The applicant is working with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to shift project plans to address wildfire impacts from the Fossil Complex fire that occurred in 2024. The applicant and landowner have experience working with NRCS to implement conservation on previous projects.
- The landowner is proactive in protecting roadways through fuels treatments, which has value for other purposes, including future reforestation.

Concerns

- The project's primary focus on infrastructure protection will provide limited ecological benefits.
- Detail describing strategies for snag management and down woody debris that outlines how these actions will directly benefit wildlife habitat would help demonstrate the project's ecological merit.
- The seed mix species composition appears weighted towards livestock forage and may not represent native conditions. The proposed species may not effectively achieve planting goals by outcompeting Ceanothus that is invading the project site. Ceanothus, however, is a nitrogen fixing species that will provide wildlife habitat benefit.
- It is unclear if the proposed contracted services costs are reflective of actual costs. The highest NRCS rates possible for a catastrophic event are used in the budget but may not be necessary to implement the actions.

Concluding Analysis

The Butte and Service Creek Watersheds suffered extensive impacts from the 2024 Service Fire that burned nearly 24,000 acres, leaving the landscape vulnerable to erosion and invasive species. Wheeler SWCD is proposing to restore the area by implementing woody residue treatment, forest stand improvement, aerial seeding, and spring development to improve soil stability and water quality. However, expected watershed benefit for the cost is unclear due to the project's primary focus on infrastructure protection over ecological benefits, a seed mix heavily weighted towards livestock forage, and unclear spring development design for the spring box and trough location.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6009-24047
Project Name: Eightmile Creek Restoration Phase 2
Applicant: North Fork John Day WC
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $150,807

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Grant
Total Cost: $190,127

Application Description Eightmile Creek is a tributary of the Middle Fork of the John Day River (MFJDR) at RM 11.8 downstream of Ritter, Oregon. The 4.75 mile project reach is located on private property starting ~3 miles upstream from the mouth and above County Rd 15. Eightmile Creek provides important spawning and rearing habitat for ESA listed Mid-Columbia Summer steelhead, however, the degraded nature of the system decreases potential productivity. Regional plans and assessments have identified many habitat limiting factors in Eightmile including degraded riparian area, lack of habitat complexity, floodplain degradation, altered hydrology, and decreased water quality and quantity. Additionally, the 2024 Battle Mountain Complex fire burned 26% of the Eightmile watershed, increasing the risk of further degradation through increased sedimentation and decreased water quality, while also offering an opportunity to take advantage of the sediment pulse in order to aggrade incised channels and reconnect floodplains.
This project proposes using a lowtech process-based restoration approach, installing beaver dam analogs (BDAs), post-assisted log structures (PALS), and strategic large wood to increase habitat complexity and water storage. This project also includes a planting effort to improve stream shading and riparian condition and diversity. This is a cooperative effort between the North Fork John Day Watershed Council (NFJDWC), the Ritter Land Management Team (RLMT), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). NFJDWC will be the project lead, providing primary project oversight, contract oversight, planting and project monitoring. USFWS will provide assistance with permitting. ODFW fish biologists will provide technical assistance. RLMT will assist with landowner coordination.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project location is prioritized due to the 2024 Battle Mountain Complex fire. The fire impacted 26% of the Eightmile Creek watershed; increased sedimentation and decreased water quality is expected.
- The project area was surveyed in 2021 to identify actions that will improve juvenile rearing habitat and thermal refugia for ESA-listed Mid-Columbia steelhead in Eightmile Creek.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project and is partnering with US Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) for programmatic consultation.

- The proposed actions including low-tech process-based restoration are technically sound methods for improving salmonid habitat conditions.
- Landowner project support is demonstrated by letters included in the application.
- The proposed project builds on a previous OWEB funded project implementing phase 1, which was a low-tech process-based restoration on the lower 0.7 miles of Eightmile Creek.
- Costs are reasonable and based on recently implemented projects.

Concerns

- The application includes maps outlining stream reaches for implementation but lacks detail on the delineation of reach breaks and specific watershed concerns associated with each reach.
- The application lacks detail on whether monitoring will be used to inform the adaptive management approach described in the application, and how partners will use that data to inform future projects.

Concluding Analysis

The North Fork Watershed Council proposes to restore 4.75 miles of critical habitat for ESA-listed Mid-Columbia steelhead in Eightmile Creek through low-tech process-based restoration. Actions will address degraded riparian conditions and habitat complexity by installing beaver dam analogs (BDAs), post-assisted log structures (PALS), large wood, and riparian vegetation. The project will increase water storage and improve instream habitat by capitalizing on the post-fire sediment pulse that will likely aggrade channels and reconnect floodplains.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$150,807

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$150,807

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6010-24049
Project Name: Rowe Creek Watershed Recover for Resilience
Applicant: Wheeler SWCD
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $189,000

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Wheeler
Total Cost: $271,894

Application Description 1) This project is located in the Service Creek Watershed in the Twickenham area, approx. 15 miles southeast of the town of Fossil, OR. 2) In 2014, this private property undertook a catastrophic wildfire event resulting in additional fire hazards and fuel loads as dead trees have fallen and slash is scattered throughout the forested area. Post disturbance and years of fire suppression has allowed Western juniper to expand into this fire perimeter and continue encroachment into critical rangelands that are needed to support livestock operations and wildlife habitat. What was historically rangelands have now been encroached by Western juniper compromising native perennial grasses, shrubs, and forbs as the landscape is left bare, with increased competition, and annual grass invasions. Juniper encroachment has further exacerbated watershed function by altering its ability to capture, store, and safely release water compromising biological diversity, wildlife habitat, and forage value (Barrett, 1981). This has also led to many springs and stream systems being engulfed by juniper reducing water quality, quantity, and overall altering flows. This property has multiple spring sources that are undeveloped that would be provide benefit for livestock and wildlife. Landowner has been implementing grazing management strategies as they utilize new technologies of virtual fence to distribute grazing and allow pastures rest and recovery. However, the lack of developed springs compromises management as pastures have to be planned around water availability. The property also hosts two declining aspen stands that are in need of protection. 3)This project seeks to address upland processes and function by addressing wildfire risk, invasive species encroachment, protect rare and declining habitats, and overall improve forage production through grazing management strategies for livestock operations and wildlife. 4) Project partners include OWEB, NRCS, ODF, Wheeler SWCD, and the landowner.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by including details on the location of project actions. Additional partner support leveraged from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will focus on grazing management strategies and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) will assist with forest practices inventory and certification.

- The application describes how the juniper treatment is addressing climate change and greenhouse gas impacts.

- The proposed treatment is implementing high priority actions identified in the John Day Basin Partnership's Upland Prioritization for the Service Creek watershed.
- Lower Rowe Creek has been a focus for addressing fish passage barriers and the proposed actions will benefit resident fish through improved water quality.
- The applicant has capacity and relevant experience to implement the project.
- The landowner is utilizing innovative grazing management tools, including virtual fence, and has been actively learning its limitations and opportunities.
- Costs for forest stand improvement and brush management are appropriate for the proposed actions.

Concerns

- The application provides a generalized description of the watershed problem, which lacks sufficient detail needed to better understand the site specific conditions the solution will address.

Concluding Analysis

Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation District is proposing actions on private property impacted by a 2014 wildfire and subsequent juniper encroachment. The project will reduce fire hazards, combat invasive juniper expansion, protect declining aspen stands, and enhance rangelands for livestock and wildlife. Springs will be developed to improve water availability and complement the landowner's virtual fencing grazing management. The collaborative effort focuses on improving upland function and watershed health.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

7 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$189,000

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$189,000

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Restoration-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6011-24053
Project Name: Ritter Post Fire Recovery: Phase 1
Applicant: North Fork John Day WC
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $306,292

Project Type: Restoration_v2
County: Grant
Total Cost: $1,101,847

Application Description 1)The proposed post-fire recovery project focuses on the headwaters of Eightmile Creek, spanning three private properties. Eightmile Creek, a tributary to the Middle Fork John Day River, is crucial for the spawning and rearing of ESA-listed Mid-Columbia Summer steelhead. The Battle Mountain Complex Fires, had devastating effects on the rural community of Ritter. Out of the 178,595 acres affected by the fire, 66,330 acres (approximately 37%) were private lands.
2)The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) conducted post-fire burn severity assessments on 3,318 acres across three parcels identifying 550 acres (16.6%) as high burn severity, 1,645 acres (49.6%) as moderate burn severity, and 1,123 acres (33.8%) as low burn severity. Wildfires significantly degrade water quality by increasing erosion, reducing soils water storage capacity, and increasing surface runoff. The loss of riparian vegetation, which provides shade and habitat, exacerbates these impacts, threatening native salmonid populations and overall biodiversity. Climate change exacerbates the frequency and intensity of wildfires, creating a feedback loop that further stresses watershed functions. Higher temperatures, prolonged droughts, and altered precipitation patterns increase the likelihood of severe wildfires, complicating recovery efforts and worsening the immediate impacts on watersheds.
3) The project aims to address wildfire impacts on 2,195 acres of private land in the Eightmile Creek watershed by restoring native upland plant communities and minimizing post-fire erosion and runoff. This project aims to fund the required 25% cost share on the Farm Service Agency's Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP). Restoration actions include seeding, falling snags on erosion prone slopes, mechanically removing dead or dying trees, and replanting seedlings.
4) Project Partners include the NFJDWC, ODF, 3 private landowners, the Ritter Land Management Team, and The Farm Service Agency.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application clearly articulates the burn severity across the project area and the proposed treatment is specifically targeted to reduce erosion and promote habitat improvement.
- The applicant is proactive to address watershed issues related to wildfire impacts and have the capacity and expertise to implement the proposed project.
- The proposed treatment is implementing high priority actions identified in the John Day Basin Partnership's Upland Prioritization for Eightmile Creek.

- Landowner and partner support is demonstrated by letters of support and match contribution.
- The applicant is utilizing partners, such as the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and Grant Soil and Water Conservation District, to provide additional guidance on treatment.
- Federal fire recovery funding will be leveraged to address wildfire impacts over 2,195 private acres and costs are reasonable for the proposed contracted services.

Concerns

- The application lacks clarity on proposed seeding; for example, there are conflicting acreage numbers for areas that will be seeded.
- The application does not provide a grazing plan for how and when livestock will be allowed back on the landscape. Details explaining the thresholds that will be used to determine when livestock can access the sites post seeding would be helpful to understand whether enough time will be allowed for seed to establish.
- The application lacks detail on snag and down woody debris retention for wildlife benefits.

Concluding Analysis

The North Fork John Day Watershed Council is proposing a post-fire recovery project targeting the headwaters of Eightmile Creek after the Battle Mountain Complex Fire in 2024. The project will restore 2,195 acres of private land by seeding, managing snags, removing dead trees, and replanting, which will address erosion and runoff exacerbated by the fires. The ODF burn severity assessments will be used to prioritize native plant community restoration and minimize post-fire damage. The project will mitigate wildfire impacts and protect the watershed's ecological health in partnership with landowners and agencies.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

6 of 8

Review Team Recommended Amount

$306,292

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$306,292

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6012-23958
Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
Project Name: North Fork Walla Walla River Design RM 6.5 - 7.7
Applicant: Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation
Region: Mid Columbia
County: Umatilla
OWEB Request: $139,319
Total Cost: $363,825

Application Description Prior phase won award! 2024 State Land Board Restoration (OWEB-funded)

1) The North Fork Walla Walla River (NFWWR) is an 18-mile long tributary of the Walla Walla River that enters near RM 52, Milton Freewater, Oregon. The specific 1.2-mile reach to be designed is River Mile (RM) 6.5-7.7.

2) The NFWWR is described in the Walla Walla Sub Basin Plan as both a priority protection and restoration area and 303D list for high water temperature. The NFWWR was severely impacted by the 100+-year flood of February 2020, the largest on record. WWBWC staff conducted Aquatic Habitat Inventory surveys on the NFWWR in July 2020 to document the pre-project status of physical habitat and identify physical habitat deficiencies. Mid-Columbia Steelhead and bull trout inhabit the project area and listed as ESA-Threatened with populations declining and status trending towards the high risk of extinction.

3) The design process will produce a stamped, engineered, 100% design package, informed by watershed and reach scale analysis to produce the most appropriate and effective treatments for sustainable, long term benefit and floodplain function. Design concepts will reflect holistic watershed characteristics and address causes, not symptoms. Resiliency will be built into design plans to address potential impacts from headwater logging operations and climate change, both essential drivers of hydrological characteristics. Salmonid suitability and habitat connectivity are objectives of the project and vital during catastrophic events, resulting in the "take" of ESA salmonids due to elevated water temperature, habitat degradation, and turbidity at lethal levels. Designs will outline implementation details for 2025 or 26 as part of a 5-mile, 5-year restoration plan.

4) The project has support from; landowners, USFWS, ODFW, BPA, OWEB, OWRD, CTUIR, NMFS, donors, other interested parties. Project performance will be gaged via WWBWC's effectiveness monitoring, funded by OWEB.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project addresses problems caused by the 2020 flood, including erosion, poor water quality, and degraded habitat.
- The project builds on previous OWEB investments in the North Fork Walla Walla River for both technical assistance and restoration actions focused on restoring river process and improving aquatic and riparian habitat.
- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by reducing the project footprint for the proposed phase.
- The proposed design will focus on floodplain connection, instream complexity, and water quality improvements, all technically sound restoration principles.
- The project is in critical habitat for ESA-listed Mid-Columbia steelhead and bull trout, which is important for species recovery goals .
- It is appropriate to utilize outside consulting services for design, given the complexity of the design components.
- Using hydraulic analysis, habitat assessment, and flow modeling to restore a multi-thread channel and recover riparian vegetation is a technically sound approach.
- The project builds off lessons learned from prior project implementation and landowner engagement, which provides insight into how to approach the design elements and engage partners on the project.
- A previous phase of the project was recognized with the 2024 State Land Board Restoration award.

Concerns

- The connection between budget line items and specific actions is unclear, making it difficult to understand if costs are adequate to achieve the proposed technical assistance.
- The application lacks clarity in describing project phases, history, and benefits, making it difficult to understand the overall project story.
- The application focuses on ecological outcomes rather than detailed descriptions of design, survey, and proposed engineering services.

Concluding Analysis

The North Fork Walla Walla River, which is critical habitat for threatened steelhead and bull trout, suffered impacts from a record-breaking 2020 flood, necessitating a comprehensive restoration design. The proposed project will develop an engineered design package for a 1.2-mile reach that focuses on long-term floodplain function and resiliency against future impacts like climate change. With support from partner agencies and landowners, the project design will improve habitat connectivity and salmonid habitat suitability. While the project addresses significant ecological needs and builds upon past

successes, the application is not clear in describing specific tasks and budget allocations for the proposed engineered design.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

3 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$139,319

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6013-23981
Project Name: BARK Aquatic Organism Passage Phase 1
Applicant: South Fork John Day WC
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $169,713

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Grant
Total Cost: $178,846

Application Description Through partnership with the Malheur National Forest - Blue Mountain Ranger District and Grant Soil and Water Conservation District, we have identified 4 passage barriers on Forest Service property to address in order to begin opening access to over 94 miles of critical native fish habitat in the South Fork John Day Watershed.

The first phase of this project is a result of the South Fork John Day Passage Barrier Inventory performed by retired ODFW District Fish Biologist, Jeff Neal, and funded by OWEB grant #: 216-6031. The inventory identified 77 full or partial barriers in the Steelhead critical habitat streams of Deer Creek, Murderers Creek, and Cougar Gulch.

We are requesting OWEB support in order to secure 100% designs, through Grant SWCD, for 4 culverts, identified in the South Fork John Day Passage Inventory, and prioritized by the Malheur National Forest. 3 of these culverts are located within the Murderers Creek watershed (Tex Creek, Sugar Creek and Dans Creek) and 1 is located in the Deer Creek watershed (Buck Creek).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by providing justification for the culverts selected for replacement, how they are prioritized, and an alternatives analysis.
- Seeking outside expertise for engineering and permitting is a sound strategy.
- Addressing four fish passage barriers will provide habitat for ESA-listed Mid-Columbia steelhead and redband trout in the South Fork John Day watershed.
- The expected future restoration actions are identified in the Mid-Columbia Steelhead Recovery plan and prioritized in the South Fork John Day Passage Barrier Inventory.
- The culverts were selected from barriers identified in an OWEB funded assessment used to prioritize fish passage projects in the South Fork John Day watershed.
- The applicant and design engineer have a proven track record of successful project implementation.

- Costs are reasonable for the expected products and leverage past design projects.

Concerns

- It is unclear whether native freshwater mussels will be considered in the design process.
- The specific design standards for fish passage, particularly flow intervals, are not defined.
- It is unclear if the barrier removals will yield the desired results if downstream barriers remain and potentially impact fish movement.

Concluding Analysis

The Watershed Council proposes to restore fish passage in the South Fork John Day Watershed by developing designs for four prioritized culvert barriers on Forest Service land. Building on a previous inventory that identified numerous barriers, the designs will focus on culverts in the Murderers Creek and Deer Creek watersheds. Successful implementation in partnership with the Malheur National Forest and Grant SWCD will open access to critical habitat for native fish.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$169,713

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$169,713

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6015-23992
Project Name: Couse Creek RM 7 Restoration Design
Applicant: Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $92,197

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Umatilla
Total Cost: $244,251

Application Description Couse Creek is a tributary that flows into the Walla Walla River. The project is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Milton-Freewater, Oregon. 2) Tributary habitat is limited in the Walla Walla Basin. Couse Creek is listed in regional Mid-Columbia steelhead recovery plans as a primary spawning area for the Walla Walla River population. Limiting factors include stream temperature, sediment homogeneity, low frequency of wood, and reduced duration of seasonal surface flows. 3) The project will design restoration treatments throughout 0.5 miles of private property on Couse Creek at RM 7 to improve spawning and rearing habitat for Mid-Columbia Steelhead. This engineered design will describe actions to increase aquatic habitat complexity, floodplain connectivity, and support riparian vegetation. The long-term objective is to improve conditions for steelhead in Couse Creek by providing refugia for juveniles, enhancing spawning conditions for adults, and decreasing stranding mortalities due to thermal barriers and dry stream reaches. 4) Project partners include the landowner, OWEB, BPA, and WWBWC.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application describes a clear need for producing construction-ready design to improve steelhead spawning and rearing habitat in Couse Creek; and clearly outlines the design components.
- The application describes a connection with adjacent instream restoration and how project partners are coordinating and working together on Couse Creek, increasing the likelihood of success.
- Incorporating environmental compliance and permitting necessary for restoration is appropriate, and partner expertise will be leveraged to complete cultural resource survey and consultation.
- The project targets a critical reach for spring Chinook salmon, ESA-listed Mid-Columbia steelhead, and bull trout and addresses relevant limiting factors, such as stream temperature, sediment homogeneity, limited instream complexity, and reduced duration of seasonal surface flows.
- Appropriate partner and landowner support is demonstrated by letters included in the application.
- The applicant has successful experience in planning and design of similar projects.
- Costs are reasonable for the expected products.

Concerns

- The application lacks detail on how the hardened rock crossings for vehicle access will be incorporated to ensure the project is technically sound and minimizes potential impacts on stream function.
- The application is not clear on grazing management, particularly in riparian areas, and how future restoration investments will be protected from livestock grazing. The applicant is encouraged to work with the landowner to develop a grazing management strategy.

Concluding Analysis

The Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council is proposing to design restoration treatments for a 0.5 mile stretch of Couse Creek, a critical spawning tributary for Mid-Columbia steelhead in the Walla Walla Basin. The engineered design will address limiting factors, including temperature and habitat complexity, which will improve spawning and rearing conditions to enhance steelhead survival and reduce stranding mortalities. Appropriate partner coordination and collaboration enhances the likelihood of success.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

2 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$92,197

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$92,197

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6017-24024
Project Name: Tamarack Creek Culvert Design
Applicant: North Fork John Day WC
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $27,488

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Grant
Total Cost: $40,478

Application Description Project Location: The proposed project is located on private land, near the rural community of Ritter, on Tamarack Creek. Tamarack Creek is a spring fed, perennial cold-water tributary to Eightmile Creek. The specific project location is just 0.1 miles upstream from its confluence with Eightmile Creek. Eightmile Creek is a tributary of the Middle Fork of the John Day River (MFJDR) and provides crucial spawning and rearing habitat for ESA-listed Mid-Columbia summer Steelhead and other native fish species.
Watershed Problem/Project Need: The current undersized culvert on Tamarack Creek is inadequate for handling spring high flows. During high flow events, the culvert diverts water down a ditch, over the road, and through a dry field, causing excessive sediment pickup and warming of the water before it flows back into Eightmile Creek. Degraded water quality (temperature and flow) and altered sediment routing have been identified as limiting factors for salmonids in the MFJDR watershed.
Proposed Work: The project aims to use technical assistance to develop an engineered design for removing and replacing and undersized culvert with an appropriately sized one. The design process would assess factors such as sizing, streamflow, and stream alignment to optimize culvert functionality while addressing water quality concerns. An appropriately sized culvert would be capable of accommodating high flows on Tamarack Creek, thereby preventing diversion of water and reducing sediment and temperature impacts on Eightmile Creek.
Project Partners: This project is a collaborative effort involving the North Fork John Day Watershed Council (NFJDWC), the private landowner, the Ritter Land Management Team (RLMT), and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- Previous application evaluation concerns are addressed by focusing the proposed culvert replacement on water quality improvement and adding additional detail on the project complexities, alternatives, and problem statement.
- The project is identified in the Mid-Columbia steelhead recovery plan and ties into ongoing restoration efforts in Eightmile Creek.
- The proposed consultant will provide a thorough analysis to ensure the design is technically sound and will meet the landowner needs.

- The proposed scope will include alternatives analysis for fish passage and vehicle access.
- The landowner has engaged in previous restoration projects and has shown support for the project.
- The proposed project leverages partnerships with the landowner, Ritter Land Management Team (RLMT), and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Concerns

- The application lacks detail quantifying the expected ecological benefits from the project.
- It is unclear how replacing the culvert on Tamarack Creek will improve conditions on Eightmile Creek and if there will be measurable water quality benefits.
- Letters of support included in the application are for Eightmile Creek Restoration and not focused on the Tamarack Creek culvert design. It is unclear if the letters are indicating support for the specific project proposed for Tamarack Creek.

Concluding Analysis

The North Fork John Day Watershed Council proposes to design a replacement of an undersized culvert that currently diverts water, leading to sediment and temperature issues impacting critical steelhead habitat on Tamarack Creek, a tributary of Eightmile Creek. The project will develop an engineered design to ensure proper culvert sizing and alignment that will address water quality concerns and improve stream function.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

5 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$27,488

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6018-24027
Project Name: Birch Creek Headwaters
Applicant: Monument SWCD
Region: Mid Columbia
OWEB Request: $31,086

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2
County: Grant
Total Cost: $33,488

Application Description 1) The privately owned property is located at the headwaters of Birch Creek (170702021006) and also drains into Rudio (170702021005) and Holmes (170702011405) Creeks 2.5 miles from the town of Kimberly, Oregon.
2) This 400-acre property consists of 7 different catchments; Birch Creek is the majority system. The property is surrounded by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and one private landowner. The property has no existing perimeter fencing so cattle are entering the property unimpeded, damaging meadow, riparian, and forest habitats. The proposed parcel would benefit from wildlife friendly cattle fencing to eliminate cattle pressure from the adjecent lands (Kauffman et al 1983). Forest restoration on the property would reduce ladder fuels and thin out Juniper to help increase spring flow and reduce fire severity risks. The proposed property falls into a moderate to high-use summer habitat area for mule deer according to ODFW (Mule Deer Initiative 2024), and migration routes run adjacent to this property. Restoration and protection through fencing would be highly beneficial to the creeks and wildlife on the property.
3) The proposed project would consist of designing fence locations, forest evaluation and unit planning, spring development locations, and cultural survey for the future restoration work. The outcome of the TA would be a turnkey single restoration project improving upland process and function, protecting headwater catchments and their associated meadow habitats, improving wildlife habitat conditions, protecting riparian habitats in Birch Creek, and providing a level of control for the new landowner. The landowner plans to predominantly manage the property for wildlife, using cattle as a management tool for grasses and fuels.
4) Partners for the Project include owner, Brian Campbell, & Monument SWCD.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The forest stand evaluation, juniper encroachment evaluation, and spring mapping will inform future restoration projects that will benefit wildlife habitat and migration.
- The project location has moderate to high use summer habitat for mule deer and there is high potential the proposed actions will improve wildlife connectivity.
- Landowner engagement for invasive grass treatments demonstrates a proactive approach to long-term management.

Concerns

- The boundary fence along public land may involve cadastral surveys and require public land manager approvals, which is not clearly addressed in the application. It is recommended that the applicant engage with the County surveyor to leverage existing survey information.
- It is unclear if the costs are commensurate with the type and quality of surveys needed and if a contractor may be required.
- The application is not clear if all involved landowners are committed to the project's goals.

Concluding Analysis

Monument SWCD proposes to focus on a 400-acre private property at the headwaters of Birch Creek, where unfenced boundaries allow uncontrolled cattle access that damages critical habitats. The proposed technical assistance will develop a comprehensive restoration plan that includes fence design, forest evaluation, spring mapping, and cultural surveys to protect meadow, riparian, and forest ecosystems. With high mule deer habitat value and migration routes adjacent to the property, the project will improve wildlife connectivity and reduce fire risks through juniper thinning and ladder fuel reduction.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

4 of 5

Review Team Recommended Amount

$31,086

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund; falls below staff-recommended funding line

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Technical Assistance-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6019-24034

Project Type: Technical Assistance_v2

Project Name: Precision in Every Decision - Greater Waterman Planning TA

Applicant: Wheeler SWCD

Region: Mid Columbia

County: Wheeler

OWEB Request: $264,623

Total Cost: $442,007

Application Description The project area lies within Wheeler County, Oregon along the northern border of the Ochoco National Forest, and the Waterman Flats area along the eastern county border between Highways 19 and 207 South (Map 1). Wheeler SWCD, NRCS, ODF, and SNW collaborated to create a large-scale resiliency project to conserve, restore, and enhance over 23,000 acres of critical range and forest lands for up to 92 landowners in the Middle John Day Basin. This project area has experienced significant landscape degradation due to fire suppression and non-sustainable grazing practices throughout the decades. These rangelands have suffered loss and vigor from past management, as juniper and invasive grasses compete for available resources on the landscapes. Springs and seeps are disappearing from the landscape as Western juniper encroaches on vital surface water and groundwater aquifers and overall degrading native perennial grass communities from expanding. Stream systems are compromised as upland rangelands are competing for resources restricting the water availability and timing resulting in low and often baseflow conditions during critical periods. In addition, forest stand density has increased leading to unhealthy overstocked stands that are more susceptible to catastrophic wildfire, insects, and disease. 3.) The Wheeler SWCD was recently awarded a $21.2M, five-year Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) application to implement climate-smart practices (314: Brush Management, 666: Forest Stand Improvement, 384: Woody Residue Treatment, 383: Fuel Breaks, 550: Range Planting, 528: Prescribed Grazing, and 338: Prescribed Burning). This project proposes to fund Wheeler SWCD staff to plan implementation projects leveraged by the awarded RCPP to create a landscape scale restoration effort. Project partners include Wheeler SWCD, NRCS, ODF, SNW, and OWEB.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The project proposes to leverage an investment from the Natural Resources Conservation Service Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) that was awarded to implement upland climate smart restoration practices. The applicant plans to build on partner and landowner engagement through the RCPP to extend restoration planning to instream projects at five locations.

Concerns

- The application lacks details describing specific restoration treatments that will be developed. More information on the location and specific actions planned for the future restoration is needed to better understand technical soundness of the approach.
- The proposed project is leveraging an uplands RCPP to plan instream restoration, yet the application lacks details on location, watershed problems to be addressed, and desired outcomes for the instream projects.
- The application lacks detail needed to understand the expected ecological outcomes and what will define success for the proposed technical assistance.
- The proposed cultural resource surveys are appropriate, although the application is unclear on the scope and scale because the instream projects are not identified or developed.
- The budget lacks details needed to evaluate whether costs are reasonable and necessary for the proposed actions. For example, it is unclear who will complete the design consultation line item and what the expected product will be.
- The watershed benefit for the cost is uncertain.

Concluding Analysis

Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is proposing to build upon a recently awarded $21.2 million RCPP grant to plan and implement climate-smart practices and address juniper encroachment, invasive grasses, and forest stand density. The proposed technical assistance application will support capacity and resources for Wheeler SWCD staff to complete preliminary planning and hire specialists to develop five projects within the RCPP boundary. However, the application lacks information describing the potential instream projects and project costs needed to evaluate proposal clarity, technical soundness, and cost effectiveness.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

$0

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$0

Staff Conditions

N/A

Open Solicitation Engagement-Fall 2024

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 225-6020-23997

Project Type: Engagement_v2

Project Name: Connecting Communities to Watershed Health: Collaborative Restoration in the Walla Walla Basin

Applicant: Walla Walla Basin Watershed Foundation

Region: Mid Columbia

County: Umatilla

OWEB Request: $87,184

Total Cost: $145,836

Application Description The Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council (WWBWC) is launching a community engagement initiative in the Walla Walla River Basin, specifically targeting areas in the Upper Walla Walla River, Couse Creek, and Little Walla Walla River systems. This project addresses the basin's critical hydrological and ecological needs, including improving stream flows, reconnecting floodplains, restoring fish habitat, and enhancing groundwater recharge.

WWBWC will conduct bilingual outreach through digital Story Maps, a council website, small group meetings led by experienced landowners, and community workshops to meet these needs. These engagement activities are designed to foster partnerships that will lead directly to on-the-ground restoration projects on private properties. Support for this project comes from the Umatilla County Soil and Water Conservation District, OSU Extension in Milton-Freewater, Walla Walla County Conservation District, and a committed private landowner who will host a peer-led gathering. By building community ties and increasing accessibility, WWBWC aims to inspire active participation in projects that improve watershed health and resilience across the Walla Walla Basin.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The applicant is engaging the appropriate partners through bilingual outreach and publications, demonstrating a commitment to reaching diverse audiences.
- The proposed engagement is targeting the appropriate geography to maximize positive impacts in the Walla Walla River Basin.
- A diverse, multi-faceted approach to landowner engagement that utilizes various avenues, such as landowner meetings, printed materials, and digital formats, increases the likelihood of success.
- The use of story maps to highlight past projects is an effective tool to demonstrate watershed restoration and the value it provides to landowners, fish, wildlife, and water quality.
- The proposed engagement supports the Walla Walla 2050 vision and other efforts near Milton-Freewater, including the ACOE General Investigation study at nursery bridge dam.

- The applicant has capacity and relevant project experience; they are positioned to engage landowners and facilitate outreach.
- Partner support is demonstrated by the letters included in the application.

Concerns

- No concerns are identified.

Concluding Analysis

The Walla Walla Watershed Council (WWBWC) proposes to engage landowners in key areas of the Walla Walla River Basin to address critical hydrological and ecological needs. Utilizing diverse outreach methods like story maps, workshops, and peer-led meetings, WWBWC aims to build partnerships and encourage landowner participation in on-the-ground restoration projects. Supported by local conservation districts and landowners, this engagement will enhance watershed health and resilience across the basin.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

1 of 1

Review Team Recommended Amount

$87,184

Review Team Conditions

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

$87,184

Staff Conditions

N/A

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item G

Water Acquisitions

Grant Offering Board Awards

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
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Agenda Item G supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority #6: Take bold and innovative action toward funding projects that advance climate resilience.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Brian Wolcott, Water Acquisitions and Capacity Coordinator
Renee Davis, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager

SUBJECT: Agenda Item G – Fall 2024 Water Acquisition Grant Awards
April 22-23, 2025, Board Meeting

I. Introduction

The OWEB Water Acquisition grant program implements a key component of Oregon Revised Statute 541.956 by "Acquiring from willing owners, interests in land or water that will protect or restore native fish or wildlife habitats." This staff report provides an overview of the Fall 2024 Water Acquisition grant offering process and requests board approval of staff recommendations for grant awards.

II. Background

During the 2022 Legislative session, $10 million was appropriated for water acquisition grants and grant administration as part of a drought resilience package. Following this investment, a separate line item, "Water Acquisitions", was added to the board's spending plan; this line item is supported by the 2022 allocation. A separate long-standing "Land and Water Acquisition" line item, supported by Lottery funds, is also included in the spending plan. Due to the fund source (i.e., Other Funds) and legislative intent of the 2022 allocation, OWEB is prioritizing spending of the "Water Acquisitions" line item for water acquisition grant awards.

Since the new investment in 2022, OWEB offered two solicitations for water acquisition grant applications, with awards in July 2023 and July 2024. OWEB received feedback from local partners that funding decisions about water acquisitions would ideally be available earlier in the year to better align with irrigation season. To be responsive to this feedback, staff accelerated opening of the Fall 2024 solicitation such that it would result in board awards in April of 2025.

III. October 2024 Grant Offering

A water acquisitions grant cycle was initiated in August 2024 with an application deadline in October 2024.

Applications Submitted

Two applications were received, and both were determined to be eligible based on criteria in the program rules. The total funding request for the two applications is $377,627.

Review Process

The water acquisition applications were reviewed in accordance with administrative rules, most recently revised in 2020. The review process utilized regional and local technical experts—comprised of fisheries, habitat, and water management experts, along with water transaction specialists—to evaluate ecological outcomes, cost effectiveness, water right validity, watershed context, and organizational capacity of the proposed projects. National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Columbia Basin Water Transaction Program, the review contractor for water acquisitions, conducted a review of organizational capacity, transaction soundness, and water rights valuation. OWEB staff convened a technical review team meeting to review each application.

Public comment was solicited through multiple pathways, including notices posted on the OWEB website, sent via GovDelivery, and e-mailed to the local county governments, state legislative representatives and senators, and federally recognized Tribes. A brief presentation about the water acquisition grant solicitation was provided at the OWEB Acquisition and Restoration Committee's March 6, 2025, meeting. The committee meeting included a public comment period, but no comments about the water acquisition grant cycle were provided.

The application evaluations are included in Attachment A. Following technical review, Application #225-9903 is recommended for funding; application #225-9904 is not recommended for funding for reasons described in the evaluation.

IV. Staff Funding Recommendation

Staff recommend the board award funding for water acquisition grants as specified in Table 1, with an award date of April 22, 2025.

Application #	Region	Project Name	Total OWEB Request	Total Amount Recommended
225-9903	2	Illinois River Sweet Cron Streamflow Restoration Project	$229,639	$229,639
225-9904	5	Clark Creek Streamflow Restoration-Pahlow Instream Lease	$147,988	$0
		Total Water Acquisition Applications Submitted	**$377,627**	
		Total OWEB Funding Recommended		**$229,639**

V. Attachments

A. Water Acquisition Project Evaluations

Water Acquisition Grant Offering / Evaluation

Application Number: 225-9903-23918 **Project Type:** Water Acquisition
Project Name: Illinois River Sweet Cron Streamflow Restoration Project
Applicant: Trout Unlimited Inc
Region: Southwest Oregon **County:** Josephine
OWEB requested amount: $229,639 **Total Budget:** $820,756

Project Overview (from application abstract)
Funding will support streamflow restoration in the Illinois River, a major tributary of the Rogue River in Josephine County near Kerby, in a reach that is limited by flow modification due to irrigation water withdrawals. Illinois River was identified as having a high ecological need and high opportunity for flow restoration by multiple planning activities including by ODFW and OWRD. The SONCC Coho Recovery Plan repeatedly cites the need for improved instream flows as a high priority recovery action for ESA listed coho salmon. Improving stream flow is also supported by ODFW's Native Fish Conservation Policy and Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan. Water withdrawals dewater Illinois River which has led to a reduction in habitat quantity and quality for native fishes including ESA-listed coho salmon. This is a widely acknowledged and primary limiting factor to fish production, growth, and survival. This creates a need for protectable instream water rights.

Trout Unlimited and Illinois Valley SWCD seek to increase irrigation efficiency on 33.4 acres and dedicate 100% of the conserved water (0.14 cfs) permanently instream through OWRD's Allocation of Conserved Water Program. The two water rights are located on the East Fork and mainstem Illinois River and should enhance live stream flows and be protectable as an instream right for 52 miles to the mouth of Illinois River. The funding requested will be used to modernize the irrigation system for the Sweet Cron Farm, an iconic local farm and farmstand on Hwy 199. This highly visible pilot project is part of TU's ongoing effort to develop and implement a streamflow restoration program in the Illinois Valley. Illinois River is a focus area, and this project will be used as a steppingstone to develop further flow restoration and irrigation efficiency partnerships in the community in partnership with IVSWCD. Project partners are Sweet Cron Farm, OWRD, NRCS, BLM, IVWC, Rogue Riverkeeper, and the Rogue Basin Partnership.

Application Evaluation
The application evaluation is based on the evaluation criteria for water acquisition applications in the Water Acquisitions Rules, OAR 695-046-0196, with input from the technical review team and OWEB's water valuation, transaction soundness, and applicant capacity review contractor.

Strengths
- These are senior water rights, with 100% of the conserved water going back in stream using the Allocation of Conserved Water (ACW) Program.
- The instream transfer of a portion of the water rights is permanent.

- The project has a significant amount of secured match from Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD).
- The overall project cost is similar to other water conservation projects that use ACW.
- The application includes strong letters of support from local partners.
- The applicant has demonstrated experience and competence completing these types of projects.
- Extensive habitat restoration work, including dam removal, is occurring in this area, which is a good complement to this project.
- Increasing instream flow is important and helpful, given that juvenile Chinook salmon and steelhead rear in this river reach, resulting in this project likely aiding fish survival in the summer as stream temperatures increase.
- The application demonstrates the value of building relationships and using this project to establish a proof of concept in a new area for focused water conservation work.

Concerns

- The estimated amount of conserved water is only about 1% of the ODFW-developed instream flow target for the Illinois River, making the ultimate environmental benefit fairly small for the overall project cost.
- The application would have benefitted from better describing the current irrigation approach to inform how the water savings estimation was generated.
- Given that an important aspect of this project is using it as a demonstration for future additional water conservation projects, the applicant could have more thoroughly explained the planned methods to publicize the project and promote their streamflow restoration program in the region.

Concluding Analysis

The applicant, in an agreement with the property owner, will use OWRD's Allocation of Conserved Water program to legally protect 100% of the conserved water to remain instream in the Illinois River as a new water right certificate with its original senior priority date. This project provides limited ecological benefit due to the small amount of instream flow improvement; however, given that altered stream flows and elevated water temperatures are identified as primary limiting factors for recovering ESA-listed Coho salmon in the Illinois River, this project stands to provide some important benefits. The project is expensive. Nonetheless, due to the significant match funding from OWRD, in-kind contributions from the landowner, and the project's value as a highly visible demonstration project for irrigation efficiency-based stream flow restoration, the technical review team supports the project.

Recommendation:

Fund

Recommended funding amount: $229,639

Water Acquisition Grant Offering / Evaluation

Application Number: 225-9904-23919 **Project Type:** Water Acquisition
Project Name: Clark Creek Streamflow Restoration- Pahlow Instream Lease
Applicant: Trout Unlimited Inc
Region: Northeast Oregon **County:** Union
OWEB requested amount: $147,988 **Total Budget:** $197,148

Project Overview (from application abstract)
Clark Creek is a tributary of the Grande Ronde River near the town of Elgin in Northeast Oregon. It provides critical spawning and rearing habitat for ESA listed summer steelhead and is historic spring Chinook salmon and Pacific lamprey habitat. Naturally low summer flows and over appropriation of surface water rights has resulted in a dry stream channel during August through September along the lower two river miles of the creek.

Beginning in 2021 Trout Unlimited (TU) has worked with landowners to restore summer surface flow in Clark Cr. As a result, surface flow has been improved during the summer months to the confluence with the Grande Ronde River, a distance of 1.9 miles.

This project is to lease one senior surface water right fully instream for five years resulting in 1.63 cfs and 325 acre-feet of water being protected instream annually through the 2025-2029 irrigation seasons. This proposal is a request to Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) to fund 75% of the cost to compensate the water right holder ($147,988) in exchange to lease the water right.

The protected reach is located immediately downstream of a permanent instream purchase and transfer of a senior water right of the same 1909 priority date. OWEB made this transfer possible through funding 2/3 of the purchase through this grant program in 2024. Securing these two senior water rights, totaling 2.85 cfs, instream will provide certainty of summer surface flow in the lower 1.9 miles of Clark Cr. when natural flows are available.
Project partners include the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program (CBWTP) for cost share of the lease payment and Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) application fee ($49,160). This project will assist the Union County Soil and Water Conservation District (USWCD) and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) with their ongoing restoration planning and monitoring in the basin.

Application Evaluation
The application evaluation is based on the evaluation criteria for water acquisition applications in the Water Acquisitions Rules, OAR 695-046-0196, with input from the technical review team and OWEB's water valuation, transaction soundness, and applicant capacity review contractor.

Strengths

- The 1909 water right priority date makes it among the oldest water rights on Clark Creek.
- The landowner has been encouraging riparian habitat recovery and the presence of beaver.
- The applicant has a good reputation for successfully completing instream water transactions.
- The proposed lease is a logical starting point to explore how streamflow restoration would work for the landowner prior to a water rights transfer being contemplated.
- The monitoring plan is robust and will monitor temperature and flow.
- Fish biologists are interested in cold water inputs from tributaries like Clark Creek to this reach of the Grande Ronde River to improve instream habitat. Water conservation is called out as a strategy in the ESA Recovery Plan for Northeast Oregon Snake River Spring and Summer Chinook Salmon and Snake River Steelhead Populations.

Concerns

- There are concerns about past use and reliability of this water right, based on what appears to be very little use in the past four or five years. Remotely sensed data appear to show irregular irrigation of the appurtenant fields. In addition, the water right included in this grant application was mentioned as potentially non-used in last year's Clark Creek grant application on a neighboring property.
- Given the lack of clarity regarding the water right being used and how often is used, some reviewers struggled to understand how the transaction would result in an altered situation in terms of instream flow.

Concluding Analysis

This proposed five-year instream lease has the potential to be a good instream flow investment, with a possibility of leading to a longer-term lease or permanent transfer in-stream. However, there is not enough information in the application about the water right, especially a demonstration that this water right has been recently used, to ensure the project currently is a strategic investment. The applicant should consider reapplying in a future grant cycle and providing clear evidence of current and past use of the water right.

Recommendation:

Do Not Fund

Recommended funding amount: $0

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item H

Land Acquisitions

Willamette Confluence Project

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
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Agenda Item H supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priorities #3: Strengthen and leverage people and organizational capacity to achieve healthy watersheds, and #6: Take bold and innovative action toward climate resilience.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Miriam Forney, Land Acquisitions Coordinator
Renee Davis, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager

SUBJECT: Agenda Item H – Land Acquisition, Partial Release of Conservation Easement
April 22-23, Board Meeting

I. Introduction

This staff report is a follow-up to Agenda Item L presented at the January 2025 board meeting. That item described a requested partial release of the conservation easement ("Easement") for the Willamette Confluence Preserve project (Grant No. 208-3090-8358). Staff presented the board with initial information and sought input about additional information board members would like to know about the request. This staff report includes responses to questions posed by the board in January and additional information about the requested partial release of the Easement.

II. Background

OWEB provided $2.5 million to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for the purchase of the Willamette Confluence Preserve (WCP or the "Property") in 2010. In 2021, the board approved the transfer of ownership of WCP from TNC to McKenzie River Trust (MRT). The transfer was completed in 2023. The Property is in Lane County, at the confluence of the Middle and Coast Forks of the Willamette River. A small portion of the approximately 1,270-acre property lies north of the Middle Fork Willamette River, and the remainder of the Property lies south of the Middle Fork Willamette River.

III. Summary of Previous Information

Two areas of WCP lying north of the Middle Fork Willamette River, shown in Attachment A (collectively, the "Parcels"), are adjacent to Georgia Pacific Park, which is managed by Willamalane Park and Recreation District (Willamalane). Georgia Pacific Park is open to the public and includes a heavily used pedestrian and cycle trail located near the Parcels.

Due to a significant level of unauthorized use of the Parcels, and the high cost of enforcing access restrictions, MRT requests that OWEB release the Easement from the Parcels. MRT's

intention is to transfer ownership of the Parcels to Willamalane after the Easement is released from them. The Easement will be unchanged for the remainder of WCP.

Release of the Easement and the subsequent transfer of ownership would enable the Parcels, which total approximately 5.5 acres, to be managed for recreational uses by Willamalane, allowing MRT to focus its resources on conserving fish and wildlife habitat on the approximately 1,250-acre portion of WCP lying south of the Middle Fork Willamette River.

IV. Additional Information

Responses to questions from the Board

During the January 2025 board meeting, staff sought board input on additional information the board would like about this proposal. Staff grouped the questions as: a) the WCP situation that caused the request for a partial release of the Easement; b) if and how OWEB should strive to avoid similar challenges and structure a process for considering similar requests in the future; and c) larger questions about the interplay between conservation investments and activities such as recreational use.

This staff report includes responses to the board's questions. As the owner of WCP, MRT is best suited to answer many of the board's questions about the Property and the circumstances that led to the request for a partial release of the Easement, with input from OWEB staff where appropriate and necessary. MRT and OWEB staff coordinated to develop responses to the board's questions, as shown in Attachment B.

Repayment of Grant Funds

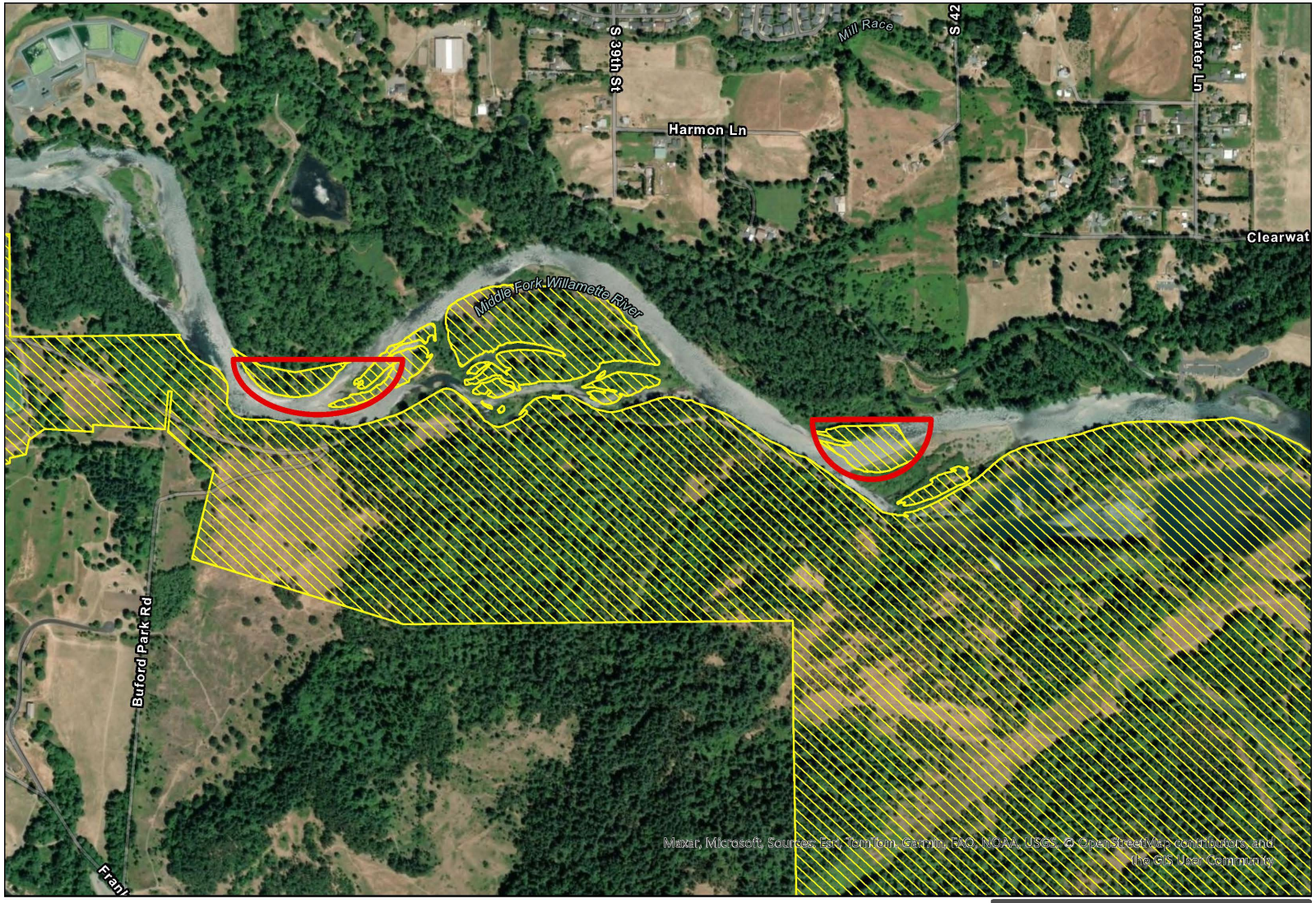
As of the time of this staff report, negotiations are ongoing between OWEB staff and MRT regarding compensation for the partial release of the easement. Staff will share more information with the board prior to the April board meeting.

Other due diligence

Lane County directed MRT to submit a land use application for the proposed transfer of ownership of the Parcels to Willamalane. The application will provide the County with a complete understanding of MRT's and Willamalane's intentions for the transfer and enable the County to determine its conditions of approval. MRT will update OWEB about any conditions or requirements resulting from the County's review process. In addition to this process with Lane County, MRT will work with OWEB to update grant related information such as baseline documentation and other items that may be needed.

V. Attachments

A. Map of Parcels
B. Combined MRT and OWEB responses to board questions



Willamette Confluence Preserve - Wildish
OWEB Grant 208-3090-8358

Responses to Board Questions at the January 2025 Meeting

At the January 2025 meeting, the board posed a range of questions when staff sought input about additional information board members would like to know about the Willamette Confluence Preserve (WCP) proposal. This proposal would allow partial release of the conservation easement on a very small acreage area as a practical solution to chronic challenges while continuing to achieve conservation outcomes associated with the much larger property.

This attachment includes responses to the board's questions about the situation at WCP from both McKenzie River Trust (MRT) and OWEB staff. As the owner of WCP, MRT is best suited to answer many of the board's questions about the property and the circumstances that led to the request for a partial release of the Easement. Several questions posed by the board also require or warrant input from OWEB staff. MRT and OWEB staff coordinated to develop the following responses to the board's questions to ensure integrated and comprehensive answers to questions posed by the board, while ensuring the entity(ies) most appropriate to answer specific questions provide responses.

Board question: What have MRT's efforts to date been to protect the parcels?

MRT response:

- MRT has an informal agreement with Willamalane staff to keep MRT apprised if Willamalane sees problems during their patrols and their management of adjacent land. Beyond discussing the issue with Willamalane/City of Springfield, MRT has not had the capacity to prevent trespassing on the property. The subject property is directly adjacent to public recreation lands and there is a clear path established by Middle Fork Bike Path users leading from the trail to the subject property on the riverside. MRT has not made efforts to close this path or reduce usage at the site to date.
- Land ownership in this section of the Willamalane-managed Middle Fork Bike Path is likely not well understood by the bike path users. Users likely are unaware they are travelling on conserved property when they leave the bike path for a sandy beach on the Middle Fork Willamette River. MRT, like the previous owner, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), has decided not to enforce trespass rules on this beach and would prefer to transfer ownership of the land to Willamalane so the bike path and adjacent properties can be managed as one unit.

Board question: Related to the bullet above, has MRT used signage, volunteers, or other approaches to deal with the trespass issues here? Has law enforcement been involved?

MRT response:

- MRT has not involved law enforcement or used volunteers to abate trespass on the subject parcel. This has been a popular area, particularly with local community members looking for a place to cool off in the summer, and the distance from the rest of the Willamette Confluence (by land routes) is significant enough to preclude effective management of the parcel. The trade-off in terms of impact to the land and the public value has made MRT hesitant to do much more.

- Since TNC acquired the property in 2010, the average annual per-acre management cost on the property south of the river has been about $109. Managing the acreage north of the river to prevent public access would be vastly more expensive and does not make sense for management on the ground from a user perspective. MRT considers this an unreasonable management burden to prevent a use that is having negligible impacts on the conservation values of the larger Willamette Confluence. MRT is confident that with Willamalane's stewardship, the area will provide an even greater public recreation benefit and the site's conservation values will be better stewarded.
- MRT recently contracted a private security firm to patrol the main section of the Willamette Confluence property to assist with trespass. They started patrols on March 1, 2025. The security firm will not be patrolling the north side of the river.

Board question: Was the trespass issue already happening and somehow "missed" in the past when the initial WCP transaction and/or the conveyance were occurring?

MRT response:

- Mapping errors are not uncommon in public records. As well, in a dynamic river system, acreages that are within or outside of mapped boundaries can change frequently and sometimes very quickly. This area has long been used by community members in summer to access wonderful swimming holes. The recreational use by the public has always been light with the greatest disturbance being the presence of litter along the shore, which is a condition that exists for much of the Middle Fork. At the time of acquisition and again at the time of conveyance, it was either unknown or simply ignored due to the limited impact it had and the extensive land use complications any "fix" to the issue may have required.
- When the parcels were first legally described they did not include land north of the river. The current property line was established based on the survey conducted in the 1930's where the confluence property was defined by the channel of the Middle Fork Willamette River. In years since, the river has moved south, but the survey using the 1930's river channel as the property boundary remained the surveyed property line, resulting in part of the property being on the north bank. The very presence of MRT ownership on the north bank of the river is a result of inflexible survey systems not being able to adapt to natural change.

OWEB Staff response:

- It is standard practice for the party assuming ownership of real property to inspect the property before the transaction. The purpose of the property inspection includes ensuring that the boundary lines are clear and there is no unauthorized use of the property.
- OWEB's role as a grant maker is to visit the property when evaluating the grant application for funding, and when conducting portfolio monitoring. The application includes questions about use of the property by parties other than the seller. The Board awarded funding for the Willamette Confluence project as part of its broader investment in the Willamette Special Investment Partnership in March 2008. During OWEB portfolio monitoring in 2017, TNC communicated that they were actively working to address unauthorized uses of the overall Willamette Confluence property (e.g., hiring night security). (OWEB staff understand, per MRT, this work was focused on the south side of the river along the west boundary of WCP and areas adjacent to Howard Buford Recreation Area.) At the time of the grant application for the conveyance, MRT noted the ongoing importance of managing unauthorized access to the

overall Willamette Confluence property. No specific information about trespass issues at the area adjacent to Georgia Pacific Park was included in the conveyance grant application or is available in OWEB's documentation by grant program staff during the time of conveyance application review or update of the baseline document. MRT contacted OWEB in February 2024 about unauthorized access of the acreage adjacent to Georgia Pacific Park to provide awareness and begin exploring potential opportunities to address concerns, which coincided with communications between MRT and Willamalane about options for management of this area.

Board question: Related to the question above, why were the two more disconnected/disparate spots included in the transaction, if they were potentially going to result in issues regarding resources to monitor/manage access?

MRT response:

- The two subject areas are both aliquots of their greater tax lots. They could not have been removed from the original transaction, either by Wildish when selling to TNC or when TNC transferred to MRT, because those parcels are legal lots of record with Lane County. Removing the subject areas from the greater taxlots would have broken the legal lot status of the parcels, making their sale a potential misdemeanor. To remedy this prior to acquisition would have required significant land use work on behalf of the seller which may have delayed the project and precluded the ability to secure the entire Willamette Confluence for public benefit.

OWEB Staff response:

- The Willamette Confluence Preserve application proposed the purchase of the entire property, which included several areas on the north side of the Middle Fork Willamette River. OWEB evaluates land acquisitions as proposed. If an applicant intends to purchase an entire property, OWEB determines whether the property in its entirety is a priority for purchase. OWEB does not condition its funding on the applicant changing its proposed transaction to omit a portion of the property from the purchase. Doing so would run the risk of the seller being unwilling to complete the transaction.
- OWEB may condition its funding on a grantee omitting a certain part of a property from the conservation easement held by OWEB. There is precedent for encumbering less than an entire property with the OWEB conservation easement. This approach often involves extra project costs for survey and appraisal, which can be reimbursed by OWEB if they are included by the applicant in the project budget. We do not have indication that this approach was flagged for consideration for WCP.

Board question: Thoughts from MRT and OWEB about having a known access violation and not defending against this?

MRT response:

- The conservation values of the larger Willamette Confluence are not being harmed significantly. Rather, MRT believes we are missing an opportunity for a partner (Willamalane)

to willingly implement more progressive management, including allowing and explicitly monitoring public access of a property within their ownership.

OWEB Staff response:

- OWEB was aware of the prior owner of the property, TNC, working to prevent trespass uses of the property. Portfolio monitoring by OWEB in 2017 documented that TNC was doing their best to address unauthorized uses of the overall property (even hiring night security), but that the property's size and adjacency to very popular recreational areas were making it hard to prevent all unauthorized uses. (OWEB staff understand, per MRT, that TNC was focused on access from the southwest corner, the western boundary near Turtle Flats and Glass Bar Island, and the roads leading in from the North Bottomlands Unit of Howard Buford Recreation Area.) Per MRT, these continue to be areas of concern for non-authorized use entrance.
- Enforcing an easement's terms helps maintain the easement. Accordingly, staff do not recommend that the board opt to allow an open violation of any OWEB-held easement, such as continued unauthorized uses of an encumbered property. Instead, staff should work with grantees to address problems in a practical manner that is consistent with the purpose of OWEB's funding and the terms of the easement.

Board question: Concern was expressed about the precedent setting nature of this request. Input was requested about how to clearly articulate why the partial release is important in this situation in a way that will not result in increased interest in removing protections from other areas that present less significant access control challenges.

MRT response:

- This protected area, like many across the state, is unique and located next to a highly loved and visited county park, state parks' land, and local parks district managed lands. This creates complexity in managing the land with high public interest in accessing riverfront parcels. In a riverine environment, orphaned parcels can be expected due to the movement of the river over time. MRT believes we should allow ourselves the flexibility to adapt to these river movements to transfer land to other public entities when it's appropriate for good stewardship, and based on the merits of each case. With climate shifts, land stewardship needs will shift with it. If this does become a precedent, it is warranted to highlight value of adaptive management. Flexibility will be needed more in the years to come from all organizations that support conservation as the political, social, and physical environment shifts and changes. Building adaptive systems early will help to build resiliency in the long term.
- The public will benefit from a release of the easement on this section of the property, which is surrounded by publicly owned and managed recreation land. The estimated expense of management by MRT for the parcels north of the river is 16.5 times that of the management expense for the majority of the Willamette Confluence. While interest in similar releases in other areas may be expressed, they should be judged on a similar comparison of the cost of change versus the public and conservation benefits gained, including public benefit in adjoining and nearby areas.

OWEB Staff response:

- The circumstances convey a consequential, chronic challenge of public interest in accessing this natural area—a small, isolated area of the Willamette Confluence Preserve that is expensive to protect—that is near population centers. A partial release of the conservation easement is a practical way to conserve MRT's resources for achieving significant conservation outcomes on the remaining 1,260 acres of the property.
- OWEB's land acquisition investments are intended to achieve perpetual protections for native fish and wildlife. Staff are developing a proposed approach by which the agency and board would consider any future conservation easement release requests. This approach will include a cost/benefit analysis showing that defending the affected area against unauthorized use would result in a relatively modest conservation outcome while significantly hindering the grantee's ability to achieve its conservation commitments to OWEB on the remainder of the property. Staff will work with the board's Acquisitions, Restoration, and Emerging Topics committee to refine this proposed approach for future review by the board.

Board question: How common are access challenges such as this on both MRT properties—and more broadly, on OWEB funded acquisitions? Is there a growing trend?

MRT response:

- Public access to natural areas is growing in demand, and all land trusts are considering ways to accommodate that while ensuring the health of natural systems. There is growing recognition of the value of integrating people into natural area stewardship, both for the health of the land and to increase public support for land and water conservation. Beyond access for the general public, MRT has worked to develop stronger relations with regional Tribes who have their own needs for land access in relation to their traditional cultural values. Managing public and Tribal access will certainly be an ongoing management opportunity and challenge with Willamette Confluence and other properties close to urban areas and frequently traveled roads. Managing for public access in areas near urban centers has become a necessity.
- MRT often receives community feedback that folks want to access conservation lands, and has developed programming to provide for ways to access our conservation lands when appropriate as a response to this feedback. Public access will continue to be an increased interest of our communities as outdoor recreation pressure continues to mount over time.

OWEB Staff response:

- In recent years, OWEB staff have become aware of problems with some of OWEB's land acquisition investments in or near to population centers and are working with the affected grantees. Problems have included unsanctioned camping or unsanctioned recreational access, depending on the property. OWEB's latest portfolio monitoring, currently underway, may paint a clearer picture of the situation. Monitoring contractors are assisting the agency in completing compliance monitoring on properties in which the Agency has invested land acquisition grant funds. For each property, the work includes conservation easement

compliance monitoring and detail on the extent the project is effectively meeting the goals and objectives. This occurs through a combination of desk reviews of project related documents and field monitoring based on specific protocols and site-specific review needs.

Board question: Thoughts from MRT and OWEB about how this situation provides lessons learned? Are there issues the agency should be considering more carefully such as boundaries, land use on adjacent lands, etc. during project development to catch this ahead of time and avoid challenges later?

MRT response:

- As noted above, dynamic riverscapes pose especially challenging boundary questions over time. At the same time and with growing success in collaborative management across the land, opportunities for stewardship success are best served with a reasonable degree of flexibility in management alternatives for all conservation lands. MRT appreciates the efforts that OWEB is making to consider this particular case, as well as the implications for future projects and programs.

OWEB Staff response:

- Staff suggest that the board utilize the new Acquisitions, Restoration, and Emerging Topics committee to developing a deeper understanding of both the challenges and opportunities related to land acquisitions, then apply this knowledge to refinements of the land acquisition grant program. Many of the potential solutions to addressing access concerns – e.g., applying extra scrutiny to acquisitions applications from areas near population centers or adjacent to public lands – are likely to carry significant trade-offs or unintended consequences. A more comprehensive look at access and risk management issues in land transactions may help surface some alternative approaches that can help OWEB balance changing expectations around public access with our original constitutional mandate.

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item J

2025-2027 Spending Plan

Grant Funds Overview

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
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Agenda Item J supports all of OWEB's Strategic Plan priorities

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
FROM: Sara O'Brien, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Agenda Item E – 2025-2027 Spending Plan
April 22-23, 2025, Board Meeting

I. Introduction

The OWEB Board is responsible to adopt biennial grant funds spending plan, which guides the agency's grantmaking for the biennium and supports state, federal, and local natural resource priorities. This is a unique responsibility that is consistent with direction in the Oregon Constitution and statute for Measure 76 lottery grant funds.

This report provides background information, program summaries, and funding levels recommended by staff for board-allocated grant programs for the 2025-2027 grant funds spending plan. At the April 22-23, 2025, board meeting, staff will present an overview of the grant funds spending plan, estimated funds available for board allocation for 2025-2027, and recommended amounts to allocate to grant programs. This is an information-only item. At the July board meeting, staff will present final recommended 2025-2027 spending plan amounts for the board to consider for adoption.

II. Background

After the Oregon Legislature approves OWEB's next biennial budget, the board will consider and approve a spending plan to allocate grant funding. Available funding for the board to allocate in the grant funds spending plan includes Measure 76 Lottery, federal, salmon license plate revenues, and other funds. The bulk of funding for OWEB's spending plan is from Measure 76 and the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF), which OWEB applies for annually.

At its July 2023 meeting, the board adopted a 2023-2025 Spending Plan totaling $149 million. Out of that total, approximately $142 million (before holdback) was available through board-allocated programs. At each board meeting since then, the board has amended the plan to accept additional grant funds allocated to OWEB by the Oregon Legislature or other funding partners. The board also amended the plan to make up to $2 million available for immediate post-wildfire watershed technical assistance grants. The total currently adopted 2023-2025 spending plan amount is $205.9 million.

III. 2025-2027 Funding Outlook and Available Funds

Based on currently available information, including the March 2025 lottery revenue forecast, staff estimate that the total lottery and federal funds available for board-allocated programs will be approximately $145 million for the 2025-2027 biennium.

In developing the 2025-2027 proposed spending plan, staff recommend a holdback of 10% or $14 million. Section IV below provides additional information about the history and purpose of unallocated holdback in the grant funds spending plan.

Summary of grant funds available for allocation:

Available estimated grant funds	$145 million
Proposed holdback (10%)-see section IV of this report	($14 million)
Available funds for board allocated grant programs	**$131 million (over the 2-year plan)**

IV. Unallocated Holdback

During the January board meeting spending plan discussion, board members raised several questions about the history of unallocated holdback (also referred to as a "reserve") in the spending plan. This section defines unallocated holdback and reviews the history and primary purpose of maintaining some holdback.

The holdback is the amount staff recommend not to allocate to grant programs in the grant funds spending plan from anticipated and estimated grant funds. As the available funds to allocate to the grant funds spending plan are based on estimates of lottery revenues for the biennium and other federal awards, the holdback does not represent cash on hand and held in a reserve account.

Following the rapid and sudden downturn in lottery revenues in the 2019-2021 biennium during the COVID-19 public health emergency, and guidance from the Legislative Fiscal Office regarding unallocated funding, OWEB began maintaining some funds unallocated in the grant funds spending plan in the 2021-2023 biennium. In the 2023-2025 grant funds spending plan OWEB staff formalized the proposed holdback to a minimum of 7.5% of estimated available funding to help mitigate anticipated reductions in federal funding (e.g. expiring Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL/IRA) funds). The holdback provided a source of funding for emerging grant program needs such as the immediate wildfire response grants authorized by the board in October 2024.

The proposed 10% holdback in the 2025-2027 grant funds spending plan will continue to help mitigate anticipated reductions in federal funding availability and the change in timing of the PCSRF awards.

V. 2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan Timeline

The 2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan will be approved by the board in July 2025. In preparation for that approval, the following steps will occur:

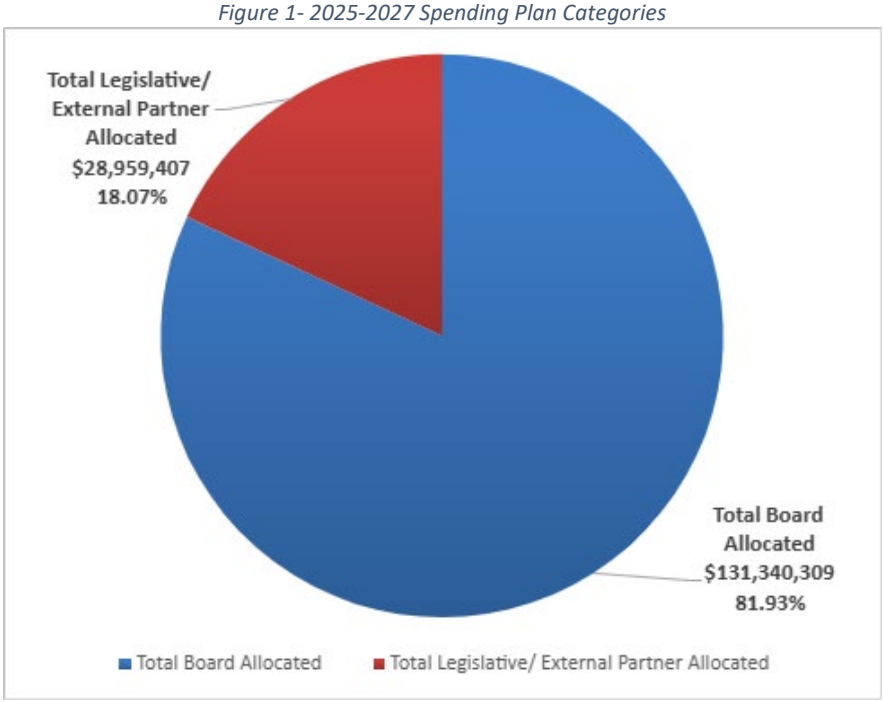
- At the April 22-23, 2025, board meeting, staff will present to the board information about the categories of the grant funds spending plan and propose an allocation amount for each grant program. The board will provide feedback on the funding amounts for each grant program.
- In July 2025, staff will present the 2025-2027 grant funds spending plan recommendations for board approval, using the 2025-2027 biennium grant allocations included in OWEB's Legislatively Adopted Budget (Measure 76 Lottery funds, General Funds, etc.) and OWEB's Federal Fiscal Year 2025 PCSRF award.
- In July 2026, the board will consider additional funds for the spending plan from OWEB Federal Fiscal Year 2026 PCSRF award and recaptured grant funding, similar to the approval at the July 2024 board meeting.
- Throughout the 2025-2027 biennium, the board may consider other additions or adjustments to the spending plan based on legislative allocations or other new funding sources, similar to what the board has done during the past two biennia.

VI. Current Spending Plan Categories & Programs

The proposed 2025-2027 grant funds spending plan has been reformatted from prior biennia spending plans to identify grant programs within the purview of the Board to allocate (Board Allocated Funding) and grant programs that are legislatively and partner directed funds that cannot be reallocated to other programs (Legislative/External Partner Allocated Funding).

Categories and proportions are shown in Figure 1, below.

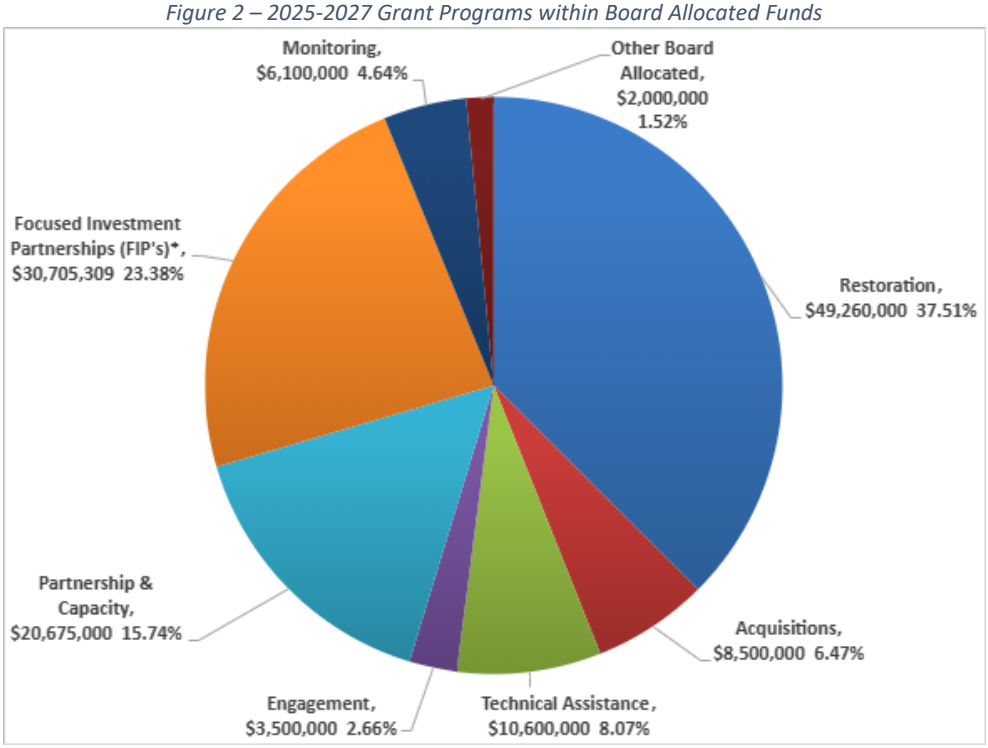
Figure 1- 2025-2027 Spending Plan Categories



The pie chart in Figure 2, below, shows the grant programs and proportions within the Board Allocated Funding section of the proposed 2025-2027 grant funds spending plan. Some constraints to be aware of regarding the funding allocation to grant programs include:

- Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF) can be used in open solicitation and FIP programs only for projects addressing limiting factors in watersheds with anadromous species.
- Per the state's agreement with the USDA for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, OWEB is responsible to pay the state's portion of the cost-share and should budget for these cost-share payments.
- The Governor's Priorities line item is a standing line item in the grant funds spending plan.
- Funding for the 2025-2027 Cohorts 3 and 4 of the Focused Investment Partnerships (FIP's) has been committed to the partnerships through initial selection.

Figure 2 – 2025-2027 Grant Programs within Board Allocated Funds



Staff have grouped grant programs differently than in previous grant funds spending plans. Given the number of programs in OWEB's grant funds spending plan today, we hope that the updated grouping will help illustrate the board's investments in major categories of programs. We would appreciate feedback on the updated grouping. We also realize that this may make it harder to compare previous spending plan allocations with proposed allocations, so we have included a previous spending plan percentages comparison (Attachment B). For the April and July grant funds spending plan document, we are also displaying the grant award mechanism and fund source for the board's information.

VII. Summary

This is an information item only for the board to provide feedback on the proposed amounts. Staff will present a final recommended grant funds spending plan to the board for approval at the July 2025 board meeting.

VIII. Attachments

A. Grant Funds Spending Plan Program Summaries
B. Previous Spending Plan Percentages Comparison
C. Draft OWEB 2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan

Grant Funds Spending Plan Program Summaries

Introduction

The programs in the OWEB grant funds spending plan support watershed health across the state. Regardless of the scale or the focus of the program, projects supported under each program are strategically identified. Each program supports state, federal, and local priorities and OWEB's review process ensures each project funded under these programs is evaluated for connections with those priorities.

This attachment describes the major categories of grant funds spending plan programs and lists the individual line items within each category.

Board Allocated Funding

Category: Restoration

OWEB restoration programs support predominantly on-the-groundwork to protect and enhance watershed health. This category includes competitive grants administered by OWEB as well as grant programs that OWEB administers in partnership with other agencies.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Restoration – Open Solicitation	Lottery, federal funds, other funds	Open Solicitation restoration grants deliver support for watershed projects that restore and enhance watershed functions. Restoration grants are offered twice per year through a competitive grant program.
Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon State Weed Board	Lottery	Awarded annually through the Oregon State Weed Board (OSWB). Grant projects protect watershed health, water quality, native fish, and wildlife habitat from the negative impacts of State Listed noxious weeds.
Small Grants	Lottery	OWEB Small Grant Program funds are allocated biennially to cooperative teams of local partners who recommend projects to OWEB for funding. This is an easy-to-engage in, competitive grant program that awards small grants for restoration practices principally carried out on private lands. Starting in the 25-27 biennium, local small grant teams will be eligible for one administration grant per team in addition to the funding available for small grants.
Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership Technical Assistance	Lottery	In 1995, the lower Columbia River was designated as an 'Estuary of National Significance' by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), recognizing the river's important to the Pacific Northwest and the entire United States. The governors of Oregon and Washington, along with the EPA, needed an organization to further study the lower river and coordinate its restoration. They created the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership (LCEP) to study and care for the lower river, and in 1999 the organization was incorporated as a non-profit organization. Since 2003, Oregon has provided state matching funds via OWEB in support of LCEP.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Cost-Share Payments	Lottery	Cooperative venture between the US Department of Agriculture and the State of Oregon, with OWEB covering the state's portion of the program costs. The purpose of this long-standing program is to restore, maintain, and enhance streamside areas along agricultural lands to benefit fish, wildlife, and water quality. As part of the state's commitment to the program, OWEB pays for 25% of restoration costs for lands enrolled in CREP, and the USDA pays 50%, as well as annual rental payments and other program incentives.

Category: Acquisitions

Oregon's approach to watershed restoration depends upon local grassroots partner organizations to develop and maintain relationships in their communities and plan, design, implement, and monitor projects. Grant programs in the Operating Capacity category support local partner organizations, helping them to plan and develop projects that address state, federal, and local priorities.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Land and Water Acquisition	Lottery	OWEB funds several types of land and water acquisitions: the purchase of property in fee simple, conservation easements, water rights leases and transfers, and contractually protected instream flow. OWEB-funded interests in land and water may be held by a variety of entities including, but not limited to, local, state and federal agencies, tribes, and not-for-profit conservation organizations and land trusts.

Category: Technical Assistance

Technical assistance grant programs support project coordination, development and design. They can provide support to grantees as they navigate complex permitting processes and cultural resource review requirements.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Technical Assistance - Open Solicitation	Lottery, federal funds	These competitive grants play a key role in developing future restoration and acquisition grant proposals and increase the capacity of OWEB's local partners to engage in project development, planning, design, coordination and permitting.
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Technical Assistance	Lottery, federal funds	These competitive grants support costs associated with local CREP implementation including staffing, travel, training, outreach, and planning.
Tribal Project Development	Federal funds, lottery	This offering was developed in 2023-2025 in recognition of the critical work that federally recognized tribes do to advance watershed restoration and land and water acquisition. The grants operate similar to open solicitation TA grants where funds are used to complete necessary assessment, design, and landowner engagement to get projects on the ground.

Category: Engagement

Engagement funds are invested through local grantees to communicate and engage with landowners, organizations, and the community about the need for, feasibility, and benefits of a specific eligible restoration or acquisition project or program that leads to the development of eligible projects within an identified geography.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Engagement – Open Solicitation	Lottery	Engagement funds are invested through local grantees to communicate and engage with landowners, organizations, and the community about the need for, feasibility, and benefits of a specific eligible restoration or acquisition project or program that leads to the development of eligible projects within an identified geography.
Strategic Implementation Areas*	Lottery	The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Agricultural Water Quality Management Program, is leading the "Strategic Implementation Area" (SIA) initiative. Select areas around the state receive focused stakeholder engagement, technical assistance, monitoring, and where necessary, compliance follow-up to address water quality concerns in agriculturally influenced areas. Local partners work with landowners and managers to meet and exceed water quality requirements, and ODA follows up as needed to address compliance concerns.

*May include a variety of grant types (restoration, technical assistance, engagement, monitoring, etc)

Category: Partnerships & Capacity

Oregon's approach to watershed restoration depends upon local grassroots partner organizations to develop and maintain relationships in their communities and plan, design, implement, and monitor projects. Grant programs in the Operating Capacity category support local partner organizations, helping them to plan and develop projects that address state, federal, and local priorities.

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Watershed Council Capacity	Lottery	Capacity grants are awarded biennially and help support the operations of effective watershed councils (WCs) that engage people in their communities to participate in collaborative, voluntary restoration of watersheds and conservation of natural resources.
Soil and Water Conservation District Capacity	Lottery	Capacity grants are awarded biennially and help support Oregon's 45 soil and water conservation districts to work in their communities to conserve natural resources and lend support to the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Water Quality Management Program.
Statewide Organizational Conservation Partnership Support	Lottery	The Conservation Partnership includes The Network of Oregon Watershed Councils (NOWC), Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD), Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT), and Oregon Conservation Education & Assistance Network (OCEAN). OWEB's funding has supported various deliverables in past biennia, including conferences, trainings, one-on-one work with local organizations, and youth activities.
Organizational Collaboration	Lottery	Organizational Collaboration grants support new or expanded strategic collaborations in order to build resilient, sustainable, local partners that achieve ecological outcomes and engage local communities.
Partnership Technical Assistance	Lottery	This grant program helps support existing partnerships to create or enhance and existing strategic action plans, to elevate the partnership's current level of performance, and to support partnership capacity. Some are just forming and might be future applicants to the FIP program or other programs investing in partnerships.
SageCon Partnership	Lottery	The SageCon Partnership is a collaborative partnership focused on the ecological, social, and economic resilience in Oregon's sagebrush country. The partnership's work spans across science, policy, communication, and on-the-ground restoration, addressing challenges that operate at a landscape scale where no single agency or organization can make a big enough difference alone.

Category: Focused Investment Partnerships (FIP)

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Focused Investment Partnerships	Lottery, federal funds	Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) – Implementation investments address a board-identified priority of significance to the state; achieve clear and measurable ecological outcomes; use integrated, results-orientated approaches as identified through a strategic action plan; and are implemented by high-performing partnerships. Existing FIPs included in the 2025-2027 spending plan are: • Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network (lottery) • East Cascades Oak & Fire Partnership (lottery) • Siuslaw Coho Partnership (lottery/federal) • Coos Basin Coho Partnership (lottery/federal) • Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative (lottery/federal) • Hood River Basin Partnership (lottery/federal) • Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership (lottery) • Oregon Sage-Grouse Partnership (lottery) • Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative (lottery)

Category: Monitoring

Monitoring grants support assessment and monitoring of watershed health conditions,

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Monitoring – Open Solicitation	Lottery	Open Solicitation Monitoring Grants are awarded once per year. Grants can be used to assist local partnerships with assessing watershed conditions to determine the quality of the existing environment; identifying causes for changes in trajectory (either up or down) in habitat, fish and wildlife populations and water quality; and developing plans to guide future monitoring efforts.
Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes	Lottery	This item includes OWEB-led initiatives that evaluate specific types of restoration actions at the project scale as well as larger programmatic scale. Examples include a comprehensive evaluation of floodplain and channel restoration projects funded by OWEB and Telling the Restoration Story grants.
FIP Effectiveness Monitoring	Lottery	Focused Investment Effectiveness Monitoring (EM) evaluates FIP funding to help board, staff, and partners to adaptively manage partnership investments in the future. The approach employed by Focused Investment Partnerships (FIPs) provides an opportunity to learn about the progress and outcomes possible under six-year investments.

Category: Other

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Governor's Priorities	Lottery	The Governor's Priorities spending plan line item supports work within the sideboards of Ballot Measure 76 that furthers priority programs and initiatives related to restoration in Oregon. Typically, these investments address landscape-scale or emerging issues related to restoration needs of importance as identified by the Governor's Office. Grant investments are targeted and catalyze broad-scale, multi-organizational work.

Legislative/External Partner Allocated Funding

Category: Restoration

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Upper Klamath water quality improvements	Other funds	OWEB administers this program on behalf of PacifiCorp and the State of Oregon to support grants for water quality improvements in the Upper Klamath Basin.
Watershed Natural Climate Solutions Fund*	Other funds	These funds came to OWEB as a result of legislation in the 2023 regular legislative session. These funds are intended to support natural climate solutions on natural and working lands, with priority given to environmental justice communities and tribes. Funds may be awarded to restoration and technical assistance projects.

*May include multiple grant types (restoration, technical assistance)

Category: Acquisitions

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Water acquisitions	Other funds	OWEB received $10 million for water acquisitions in the 2022 regular legislative session, with the understanding that water acquisitions are complex projects that take several years to develop. The funding in this program will support several years worth of projects that help restore streamflows in Oregon.
Drinking Water Source Protection	To Be Determined--Will depend upon 25-27 Legislatively Adopted Budget	This new program came to OWEB as a result of legislation in the 2023 regular legislative session. This program provides grants for drinking water suppliers to acquire land to protect drinking water sources. For the 2023-2025 biennium, the legislature provided OWEB two types of initial grant funding for the program, general funds and lottery bonds.
Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program	Legislatively allocated General Funds to Other Funds	This program provides grants for several types of projects that provide dual benefits to farms and ranchlands and to natural resources. Project types include conservation easements and covenants, conservation management plans and payments for practices, technical assistance, and farm transition planning.

Category: Technical Assistance

Program	Fund Sources	Description
USDA Farm Bill Technical Assistance	Federal funds	OWEB administers these funds on behalf of the USDA-NRCS and grants them out to local partners to support Farm Bill program delivery.

Category: Partnership & Capacity

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Forest Collaboratives	Other Funds (TBD depending on ODF legislatively adopted budget)	OWEB administers this program through an agreement with the Oregon Department of Forestry. Grants help collaborative groups increase restoration efforts on federal forests statewide by enhancing and strengthening the effectiveness of local collaboratives.

Category: Monitoring

Program	Fund Sources	Description
Intensively Monitored Watersheds	Other funds	OWEB administers funding on behalf of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Council (PSMFC) to support long-term monitoring in the Upper Middle Fork John Day River Intensively Monitored Watershed. Funds support collaborative monitoring efforts by ODFW, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and the North Fork John Day Watershed Council.

Category: Other Legislative/Partner Allocated

Program	Fund Sources	Description
ODFW PCSRF Funding	Federal funds	OWEB is the state's designated applicant for PCSRF funds. A portion of the funds support anadromous fish recovery and monitoring efforts at ODFW.

Previous Spending Plan Percentages for Board-Allocated Programs

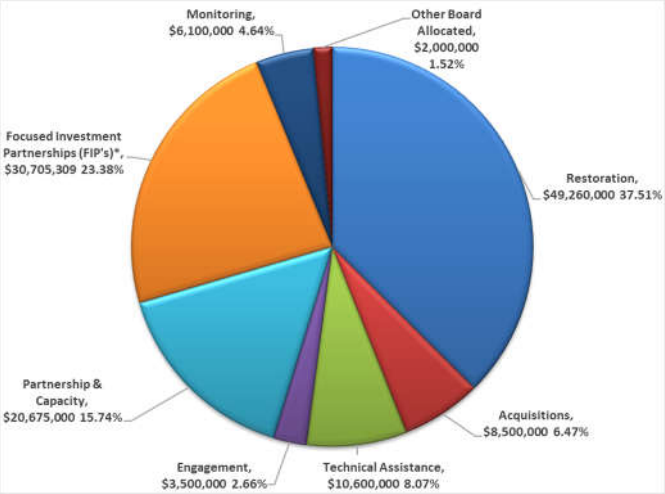
Category/Biennium	**2015-2017**	**2017-2019**	**2019-2021**	**2021-2023**	**2023-2025**	**2025-2027**
Open Solicitation	63%	62%	55%	55%	49%	59%
Focused Investments	17%	19%	26%	26%	28%	23%
Operating Capacity	18%	16%	16%	16%	13%	16%
Other	2%	3%	3%	3%	10%	2%

*Note: The spending plan percentages are based on the board approved spending plan from July of the 2nd year of the biennium (the full 2-year spending plan).

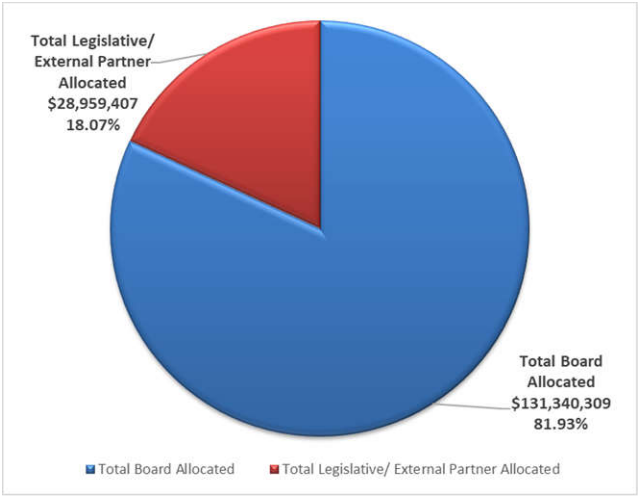
DRAFT OWEB 2025-2027 GRANT FUNDS SPENDING PLAN *DRAFT*

April 2025 Board Meeting

2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan - Grant Types in Board Allocated Funding



2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan - Board Allocated Funding and Legislative/External Partner Allocated Funding



	GRANT PROGRAMS	Grant Award Mechanism	Fund Source	DRAFT July 2025 Spending Plan	DRAFT July 2026 Anticipated Additions	DRAFT 2025-2027 Spending Plan
	Board Allocated Funding					
1	***Restoration***					
2	Open Solicitation	Board Awarded	Lottery/ Federal/Other	37,380,000	2,500,000	39,880,000
3	Weed Grants	Delegated Award	Lottery	3,500,000		3,500,000
4	Small Grants	Delegated Award	Lottery	4,800,000		4,800,000
5	Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership	Delegated Award	Lottery	330,000		330,000
6	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Prog (CREP)-Cost Share	Delegated Award	Lottery	750,000		750,000
7	**Total Restoration**			**$ 46,760,000**	**$ 2,500,000**	**$ 49,260,000**
8	***Acquisitions***					
9	Land and Water Acquisition	Board Awarded	Lottery	6,500,000	2,000,000	8,500,000
10	**Total Acquisitions**			**$ 6,500,000**	**$ 2,000,000**	**$ 8,500,000**
11	***Technical Assistance***					
12	Open Solicitation	Board Awarded	Lottery/Federal	7,500,000	500,000	8,000,000
13	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) TA	Board Awarded	Lottery/Federal	1,600,000		1,600,000
14	Tribal Project Development	Delegated Award	Lottery/Federal	1,000,000		1,000,000
15	**Total Technical Assistance**			**$ 10,100,000**	**$ 500,000**	**$ 10,600,000**
16	***Engagement***					
17	Open Solicitation	Board Awarded	Lottery	2,000,000		2,000,000
18	Strategic Implementation Areas*	Delegated Award	Lottery	1,500,000		1,500,000
19	**Total Engagement**			**$ 3,500,000**	**$ -**	**$ 3,500,000**
20	***Partnership & Capacity***					
21	Capacity grants - Watershed Councils (WC)	Board Awarded	Lottery	9,900,000		9,900,000
22	Capacity grants - Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD)	Delegated Award	Lottery	8,700,000		8,700,000
23	Statewide Organizational Conservation Partnership Support	Board Awarded	Lottery	525,000		525,000
24	Organizational Collaboration	Board Awarded	Lottery	-		-
25	Partnership Technical Assistance	Board Awarded	Lottery	1,200,000		1,200,000
26	Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership	Delegated Award	Lottery	350,000		350,000
27	**Total Partnership & Capacity**			**$ 20,675,000**	**$ -**	**$ 20,675,000**
28	***Focused Investment Partnerships (FIP)*:**					
29	**Cohort 3 - 3rd Biennium**					
30	Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network (cohort 3-3rd biennium)	Delegated Award	Lottery	2,959,837		2,959,837
31	East Cascades Oak & Fire Partnership	Delegated Award	Lottery	2,177,000		2,177,000
32	Siuslaw Coho Partnership	Delegated Award	Lottery/Federal	4,000,000		4,000,000
33	Coos Basin Coho Partnership	Delegated Award	Lottery/Federal	3,747,408		3,747,408
34	Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative	Delegated Award	Lottery/Federal	2,390,250		2,390,250

	GRANT PROGRAMS	Grant Award Mechanism	Fund Source	DRAFT July 2025 Spending Plan	DRAFT July 2026 Anticipated Additions	DRAFT 2025-2027 Spending Plan
35	**Cohort 4 - 2nd Biennium**					
36	Hood River Basin Partnership	Delegated Award	Lottery/Federal	3,503,414		3,503,414
37	Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership	Delegated Award	Lottery	4,000,000		4,000,000
38	Oregon Sage-Grouse Partnership	Delegated Award	Lottery	4,000,000		4,000,000
39	Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative	Delegated Award	Lottery	3,927,400		3,927,400
40	**Total FIP's**			**$ 30,705,309**	**$ -**	**$ 30,705,309**
41	***Monitoring***					
42	Open Solicitation	Board Awarded	Lottery	5,000,000		5,000,000
43	Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes	Board Awarded	Lottery	600,000		600,000
44	FIP Effectiveness Monitoring	Delegated Award	Lottery	500,000		500,000
45	**Total Monitoring**			**$ 6,100,000**	**$ -**	**$ 6,100,000**
46	***Other Board Allocated***					
47	Governor's Priorities	Delegated Award	Lottery	2,000,000		2,000,000
48	**Total Other**			**$ 2,000,000**	**$ -**	**$ 2,000,000**
49	**TOTAL BOARD ALLOCATED**			**$ 126,340,309**	**$ 5,000,000**	**$ 131,340,309**
50	**Percent (%) of OWEB Grant Funds Spending Plan total**			**84.62%**	**45.45%**	**81.93%**
	Legislative/External Partner Allocated Funding					
51	***Restoration***					
52	Upper Klamath Water Quality Improvements-PacifiCorp IM11	Delegated Award	Other Funds	5,709,407		5,709,407
53	Watershed Natural Climate Solutions Fund*	Board Award	Other Funds	1,500,000		1,500,000
54	**Total Restoration**			**$ 7,209,407**	**$ -**	**$ 7,209,407**
55	***Acquisitions***					
56	Water Acquisition - Flexible Incentive Account	Board Award	Other Funds	8,000,000		8,000,000
57	Drinking Water Source Protection - TBD	Board Award	Other Funds	-		-
58	Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) - TBD	Board Award	Other Funds	-		-
59	Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) - Watershed Natural Climate Solutions Fund	Board Award	Other Funds	750,000		750,000
60	**Total Acquisitions**			**$ 8,750,000**	**$ -**	**$ 8,750,000**
61	***Technical Assistance***					
62	USDA-NRCS Farm Bill Technical Assistance - TBD	Delegated Award	Federal Funds	-		-
63	**Total Technical Assistance**			**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**
64	***Partnership & Capacity***					
65	Forest Health Collaborative-Or Dept of Forestry- TBD	Board Award	Other Funds	-	-	-
66	**Total Partnership & Capacity**			**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**
67	***Monitoring***					
68	Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission-(PSMFC) Intensively Monitored Watersheds - TBD	Delegated Award	Other Funds	-	-	-
69	**Total Monitoring**			**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**
70	***Other Legislative/External Partner Allocated***					
71	Or Dept of Fish & Wildlife-PCSRF (Federal Funds)	Delegated Award	Federal Funds	7,000,000	6,000,000	13,000,000
72	**Total Other**			**$ 7,000,000**	**$ 6,000,000**	**$ 13,000,000**
73	**TOTAL LEGISLATIVE/EXTERNAL PARTNER ALLOCATED**			**$ 22,959,407**	**$ 6,000,000**	**$ 28,959,407**
74	**Percent (%) of OWEB Grant Funds Spending Plan total**			**15.38%**	**54.55%**	**18.07%**
	TOTAL OWEB Grant Funds Spending Plan			**$ 149,299,716**	**$ 11,000,000**	**$ 160,299,716**

* May include a variety of grant types (e.g. Restoration, Engagement, Technical Assistance, and Acquisition, etc.)

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Agenda Item K

2025-2027 Spending Plan

Governor's Priorities Proposal

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360
Salem OR 97301-1290
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Agenda Item K supports all of OWEB's Strategic Plan priorities.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Geoff Huntington, Governor Kotek's Natural Resources Senior Policy Advisor

SUBJECT: Agenda Item K – 2025-2027 Spending Plan – Governor's Priorities Proposal
April 22-23, 2025, Board Meeting

I. Introduction

The Governor's Priorities spending plan line item supports Ballot Measure 76 funded work that furthers priority programs and initiatives related to restoration in Oregon. Typically, these investments address landscape-scale or emerging issues related to restoration needs identified by the Governor's Office. Grant investments are targeted and catalyze broad-scale, multi-organizational work, and address both technical assistance and restoration needs while focusing on areas of importance to the Governor.

Governor Kotek's Office anticipates only partially expending the FY23-25 funds before the end of this biennium, in the form of one or more grants to eligible grantees to support a cross-agency landscape resiliency effort being developed out of Governor Kotek's Natural Resource Office. The Governor's Office also requests that the OWEB board rollover any portion of the $1,000,000 reserved in the FY23-25 spending plan that remains unexpended at the end of the biennium, into the FY25-27 spending plan, for a total amount of up to $2,000,000. The intent is to leverage these funds across two biennia to allow for a larger-scale and more strategic investment.

II. Background

Under Ballot Measure 76, OWEB's funding has flexibility to address a range of needs that lead to on-the-ground restoration work. Combined with Oregon's approach to addressing broad-scale initiatives through multi-organizational partnerships, this has resulted in the use of OWEB funding as a catalyst to support emerging or particularly complex natural resource challenges and opportunities.

These investments have varied over time and include:

- Support for initial work of forest-health collaboratives, including statewide coordination, technical support for local collaboratives, and planning and implementation support for these groups.
- Partnerships with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to support on-the-ground investments in Salmon Stronghold projects. This work led to a multi-

organizational partnership to develop a Coastal Coho Business Plan and component action plans through a partnership with NFWF, the Wild Salmon Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

- Support for the development of a federal, state, and local agency and organization partnership focused on clean water. This partnership includes a comprehensive framework that supports monitoring and implementation focused on the state's agricultural water quality program and is currently focused on Strategic Implementation Areas.
- Support for the development of a working lands easement program concept focused on agricultural lands. This resulted in legislative approval of the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program.

III. Investments by Biennium

Investments in this spending plan line item are typically approximately $1 million per biennium. Because this program operates as a proactive grant-making item, the demand does not exceed the funding available.

IV. Board Initiatives in the 21-23 Biennium

In the 2021-2023 biennium, the board invested in three initiatives through this spending plan item:

Post-Fire Recovery Immediate Response
$300,000 to provide grants to support immediate post-fire recovery work during the 2021 and 2022 fire seasons. Eligible implementation actions included stabilization efforts and log salvage for future restoration. Funding also could be used for engagement to aid landowners in accessing other fire-response funding and technical assistance for fire impact assessments. Grants awarded under this offering included post-fire immediate recovery grants for the Cougar Peak, Bootleg, and Double Creek wildfires.

Climate-Related Initiatives
$350,000 to support work that was mutually agreed upon by OWEB and the Governor's Office. Grants awarded under this offering have included: a grant to develop a baseline soil carbon map for Oregon; and a technical assistance grant to assess the current and forecasted need for reforestation and the potential capacity of the reforestation pipeline (e.g., seed, seedling production, site preparation, planting, post-planting maintenance, etc.) following wildfires and other climate-driven events and disturbances.

Tide Gate Partnership
$247,000 to support efforts associated with increased tide gate repair and replacement efforts along the Oregon Coast and lower Columbia River. Grants awarded under this offering have included: a monitoring grant to develop a common monitoring approach for tide gate replacement projects; and a technical assistance grant to develop an engineering tool that can model tide gate size based on location and other inputs, to be used by landowners and regulatory agencies to assist with complex design and permitting processes.

The remaining $53,000 balance in the 2021-2023 Governor's Priorities line item was allocated to the Klamath River post-dam removal watershed restoration.

V. 25-27 Biennium Focus Areas

Governor Kotek's Office is in the process of evaluating several potential investments and will provide updates at a future meeting. If the "rollover" across biennia is approved by the board, focus areas for the FY25-27 are likely to include additional grants to eligible grantees to support the landscape resiliency effort, as well as potential direct investment in specific land and water restoration projects of high priority to the Governor.

VI. Request

Governor Kotek's Office requests that the OWEB Board shift up to $1,000,000 reserved in the FY23-25 spending plan into the FY25-27, for a total amount of up to $2,000,000.

OREGON
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Agenda Item L

Committee Updates

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

April 22-23, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

Partnerships and Capacity Committee Update

Committee Members

Chris Allen, Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Aaron Curtis, Lindsay McClary, Woody Wolfe

Meeting Summary

The Partnerships and Capacity Committee met on March 4, 2025.

The committee discussed (1) an overview of OWEB programs that fall within the committee's domain; (2) the status of public engagement on FIP ecological priorities; and (3) upcoming June committee agenda items for a) FIP Ecological Priorities and b) Council Capacity awards in preparation for the July board meeting. Public comment was provided by Neil Schulman of North Clackamas Watersheds Council, Terri Preeg Riggsby of the Network of Oregon Watershed Councils, and Andrea Kreiner of Oregon Association of Conservation Districts.

OWEB Programs within the Committee's Domain

Eric Williams, Restoration Grants Manager, provided an overview of the grant programs within the committee's domain. These include various offerings funding investments in partnerships and capacity: Focused Investment Partnerships, Council and District Capacity, Partnership Technical Assistance, Engagement, Technical Assistance, and several other "prior committed" offerings such as the Lower Columbia Estuaries Partnership.

FIP Ecological Priorities

Eric Hartstein, Policy Coordinator, provided a status update on public engagement informing the board's five-year determination of FIP ecological priorities. Twenty representatives of partner organizations, including grantees, attended the first of seven scheduled listening sessions, including two specifically for tribal representatives. During the sessions attendees will be asked which priorities to keep, discard, or revise, and whether the board should consider new priorities. A broadly distributed survey asks the same questions and over 60 responses have been received to date.

Staff will summarize public responses and work with the committee at its June meeting on draft ecological priorities for board feedback at the July meeting.

Upcoming Agenda Items

In addition to FIP ecological priorities, the June committee meeting will include a preview of Council Capacity award recommendations the board will consider in July. The September meeting will include a report on OWEB's DEI plan.

Co-Chairs and Charter

The committee elected Lindsay McClary and Woody Wolfe as co-chairs. Sara O'Brien, Executive Director, presented an outline for a committee charter, with the aim of presenting a draft charter at the next meeting.

To Be Presented at the Board Meeting By:

Sara O'Brien

April 22-23, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

Acquisitions, Restoration, and Emerging Topics Committee Update

Committee Members

Dan Brown, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Eric Murray, and Mark Webb

Meeting Summary

The Acquisitions, Restoration, and Emerging Topics committee met on March 6, 2025.

The committee discussed (1) an overview of OWEB programs that fall within the committee's domain; (2) upcoming agenda items for a) Drinking Water Source Protection and b) Water Acquisition grant programs at the April board meeting; and (3) an introduction to the Land Acquisition grant program modernization. Public comment was provided by Joe Buttafuoco of the Coalition of Land Trusts.

OWEB Programs within the Committee's Domain

Sara O'Brien, Executive Director, provided an overview of the grant programs within the committee's domain. These include restoration grants supported by several funding sources; land acquisitions; water acquisitions; small grants; weed grants; Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program; and Drinking Water Source Protection. Sara noted that in addition to acquisition and restoration topics, she would work with the committee to track emerging topics of interest to the committee.

Upcoming Agenda Items for the April Board Meeting

Audrey Squires, Drinking Water Source Protection Specialist, provided the committee with an update about status of the first grant cycle for the Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) program. She reviewed the program's statutory intent and funding sources and described high-level program priorities per legislative direction to the agency. Audrey then updated the committee about the grant applications received, including two loan repayment requests associated with prior transactions and six requests for prospective (or forward looking) projects. The total funding request was approximately $6 million and total funding available for this grant cycle is $5 million. Audrey reviewed the timeline for the grant cycle, noting that the Technical Review Team meeting would be held on March 10, 2025, and staff would bring funding recommendations to the OWEB board at its April meeting.

Brian Wolcott, Water Acquisitions and Capacity Coordinator, updated the committee about the current Water Acquisitions grant cycle. He began with a reminder about statutory direction for this grant program and types of projects that are eligible, noting connections to habitat and species needs identified by Oregon Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Environmental Quality and federal and Tribal fish and wildlife agencies. Brian outlined the technical review process for water acquisitions and reminded the committee of the evaluation criteria in administrative rule. He provided overviews of the two grant applications received this cycle in preparation for a presentation to and deliberation by the full board about water acquisition grant awards at the April meeting.

Introduction to Land Acquisition Modernization

Renee Davis, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager, outlined the Land Acquisition grant program modernization process. Renee reviewed the focus of the process (i.e., the Measure 76-supported land acquisition programs that focuses on native fish and wildlife species and their habitats) and outlined the mandate to the agency from Governor Kotek. She then described the

process to date to obtain feedback from local partners, including both the land trust community and their partners and Tribal governments. Renee reviewed the categories of feedback received about challenges and opportunities; broadly these categories are philosophical, cultural, and process issues and topics. She then reviewed the proposed workplan for the committee, which ultimately aims to present initial recommendations for program modernization to the OWEB board in January of 2026. The committee provided feedback about historical information and perspectives that would inform their deliberations, and the importance of the committee receiving updates about OWEB's parallel work to address past input from Tribal sovereigns about opportunities to more fully participate in the land acquisition grant program.

To Be Presented at the Board Meeting By:

Sara O'Brien

April 22-23, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

Tracking and Communicating Results, Mission, and Values Committee Update

Committee Members

Mark Labhart, Claire Tachella, Brian Staab, Lisa Jane McAlister and Jamie McLeod-Skinner

Meeting Summary

Tracking and Communicating Results, Mission, and Values committee met on March 12, 2025.

The committee discussed (1) an overview of OWEB programs that fall within the committee's domain; (2) upcoming agenda topics for the committee to discuss. There was no public comment.

OWEB Programs within the Committee's Domain

Courtney Shaff, Monitoring and Reporting Manager provided an overview of the grant programs within the committee's domain. These include monitoring grants awarded through both Open Solicitation and Focused Investment Partnership grant programs, Quantifying Outputs and Outcomes, which includes both Telling the Restoration Story and Effectiveness Monitoring grants and Strategic Implementation Areas grants. Stephanie Page, Deputy Director, provided an overview of the reporting activities and communication strategies that OWEB staff will be presenting at future committee meetings for committee input, including strategic plan reporting and legislatively required reporting such as the annual KPM report and Biennial Report.

Upcoming Committee Agenda Items

At the next committee meeting OWEB staff will provide a Monitoring 101, including information on how OWEB's different monitoring programs support monitoring at different scales across the state.

To Be Presented at the Board Meeting By:

Sara O'Brien

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item M

Drinking Water Source Protection

Grant Offering Board Awards

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
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Agenda Item M supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority #3: Use our funding to strengthen and leverage capacity of people and organizations to achieve healthy watersheds, and priority # 5: Increase connection of urban and working lands to watershed health.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Audrey Squires, Drinking Water Source Protection Specialist
Renee Davis, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager

SUBJECT: Agenda Item M – Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Awards
April 22-23, 2025, Board Meeting

I. Introduction

This staff report provides an overview of the Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) Grant Program Fall 2024 grant offering and funding recommendations. Staff funding recommendations for the Board's consideration are outlined in Attachment A to the staff report and are contingent upon a successful Lottery Revenue Bond sale.

II. Background

In June 2023, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2010 that, combined with other legislation, allocated $5 million to establish the DWSP Grant Program at OWEB using General Funds ($1M) and Lottery Revenue Bonds ($4M). The Lottery Revenue Bond Sale is slated to occur on April 22, 2025.

Through the DWSP Grant Program, OWEB provides grants to public water suppliers to protect, restore, or enhance sources of drinking water through land conservation and protection. Grants can be for forward-looking transactions or for loan repayment or reimbursement of past transactions. Public water suppliers with a service population of less than 25,000 people are eligible for the program. The program focuses on rural communities and/or lower-income populations, but is not limited to these communities.

Following the board's adoption of administrative rules for the program in July 2024, staff developed informational materials and program guidance for prospective applicants. Staff conducted a significant amount of program outreach, including developing relationships with a new set of customers, i.e. public water suppliers. Considerable collaboration with other agencies – including Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Health Authority, Business Oregon, and US Environmental Protection Agency – made the program development process efficient and effective.

Staff submitted a report to the legislature in March 2025, shown in Attachment F, which describes performance of the DWSP Grant Program.

III. Summary of Solicitation and Review Process

Solicitation

In Fall 2024, staff opened the first DWSP grant solicitation cycle, beginning with hosting a webinar for prospective applicants on October 10, 2024. The cycle ran from October 12 to December 12. During this time, staff consulted with each prospective applicant on the details of their project, eligibility, and application and program requirements, and was available to answer any questions.

Applications Submitted

Eight applications were submitted requesting a total of approximately $6.1 million. Applications were geographically distributed across much of the state. See map in Attachment B.

Grant Application Review Process

The grant application review process began with staff reviewing each application for eligibility and completeness. Each of the eight applications was determined eligible and complete, moving them on to the next phases of the review process.

Next, staff facilitated a two-pronged review process, using both contractors and a technical review team (TRT) to evaluate applications based on the 11 criteria established in Oregon Administrative Rule 695-048-0110. The contractors focused on the strength of the technical and legal aspects of the real estate transaction, title review, quality of due diligence information provided by the applicant, and project readiness. The TRT included 12 members representing six state agencies, three federal agencies, one tribe, OSU Extension, and one member retired from a public water supplier. The TRT brought expertise relevant to the evaluation criteria, including drinking water source protection, public water systems, water quality, hydrology, watershed processes, hydrogeology, forest stewardship, silviculture, land transactions, project management, and organizational capacity.

The TRT reviewed applications and attended virtual site visits with applicants in January and February 2025. On March 10, staff facilitated a full-day TRT meeting, at which staff presented a synthesis of the contractors' real estate and due diligence analyses to inform the reviewers' evaluations. TRT members then evaluated and ranked applications based on evaluation criteria. Staff compiled the evaluations, Attachment C, and developed the funding recommendations to present to the board.

IV. Match and Leverage

Legislators expressed a clear interest in using DWSP grant funds to leverage outside funding sources, especially federal dollars. For the projects recommended for funding, $6.7 million has been offered as match and leverage toward the $5 million of DWSP Grant Program funds. This far exceeds the 5% cash or in-kind match requirement in program rules, which was established so that match would not be a barrier for under-resourced communities.

V. Funding Conditions and Notice of Grant Requirements

Standard funding conditions specific to DWSP grants were developed by staff and approved by Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Administrative Services, and Bond Counsel. The funding conditions are included in Attachment D. The conditions require the grantee to perform typical due diligence tasks with the expectation of review and approval by OWEB prior to release of grant funds. Attachment D includes a comprehensive list of due diligence items, as well as space for project-specific conditions since each project is unique.

DWSP administrative rules require grantees to record on title a Notice of Grant Requirements (NOGR) providing protection in perpetuity for DWSP Grant Program investments. The template for the NOGR for fee simple projects, which was developed in coordination with DOJ, is included in Attachment E. Staff will work with grantees to incorporate similar requirements into non-fee simple legal agreements.

VI. Funding Recommendations

Staff recommend the board award DWSP grants in the amount of $5,000,000, contingent upon a successful Lottery Revenue Bond sale, with an award date of April 23, 2025, as shown in Attachment A, with the standard required conditions detailed in Attachment D. The funding recommendations are split into two categories (loan repayment and non-loan repayment) based on legislative intent of the program.

VII. Attachments

A. DWSP Funding Recommendations
B. Location Map of Fall 2024 DWSP Applications
C. DWSP Application Evaluations
D. DWSP Grants – Required Conditions
E. DWSP Notice of Grant Requirements for Fee Simple Projects
F. DWSP 2025 Legislative Report

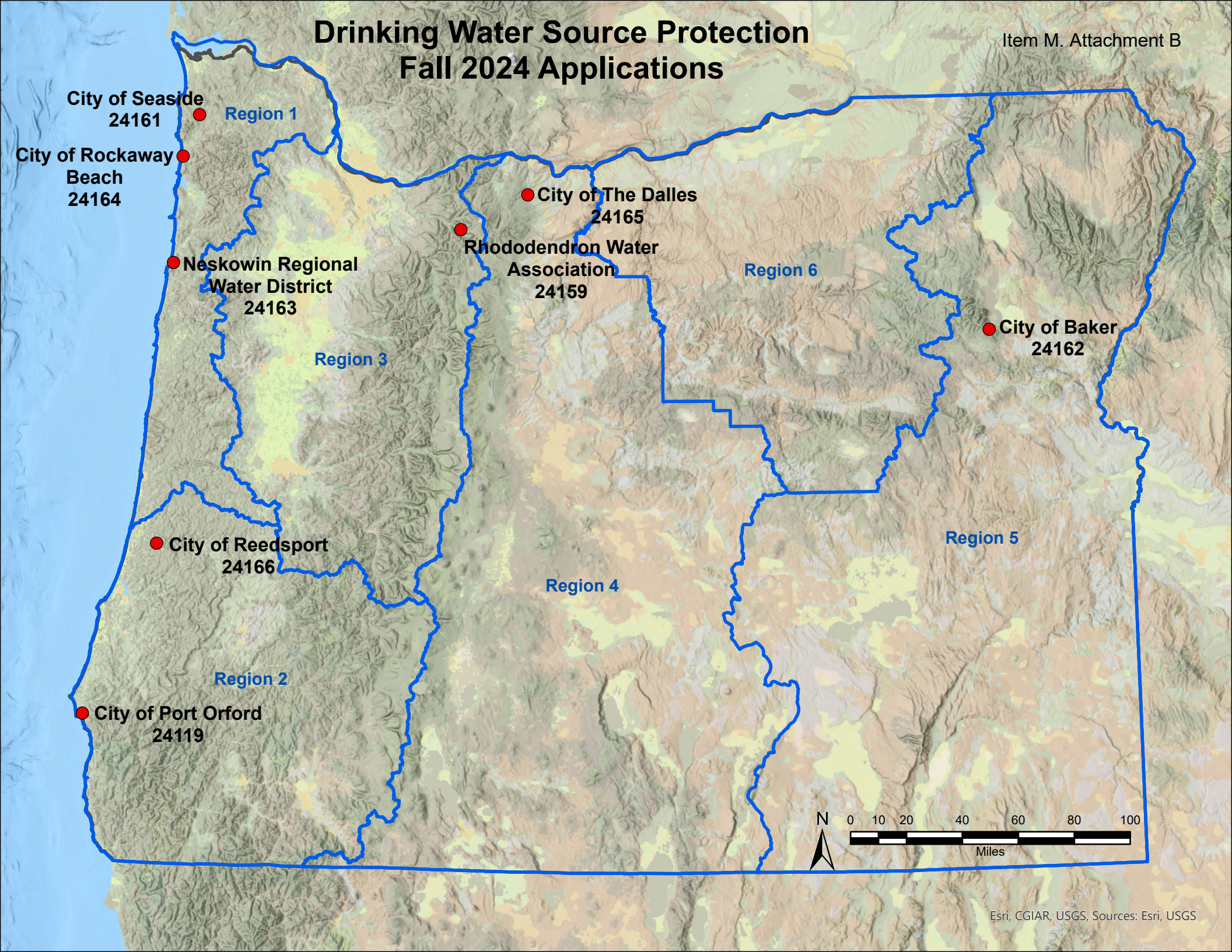
LOAN REPAYMENT PROJECTS

Rank	Application No.	Applicant	Amount Requested	Funding Recommendation
1	225-8016-24119	City of Port Orford	$415,735	$415,735
2	225-8016-24159	Rhododendron Water Association	$143,460	$155,460
		Total	***$559,195***	***$571,195***

NON-LOAN REPAYMENT PROJECTS

Rank	Application No.	Applicant	Amount Requested	Funding Recommendation
1	225-8016-24163	Neskowin Regional Water District	$983,722	$983,722
2	225-8016-24166	City of Reedsport	$1,494,000	$1,494,000
3	225-8016-24164	City of Rockaway Beach	$1,422,270	$1,422,270
4	225-8016-24165	City of The Dalles	$675,000	$528,813
5	225-8016-24161	City of Seaside	$774,115	$0
6	225-8016-24162	City of Baker City	$237,500	$0
		Total	***$5,586,607***	***$4,428,805***
		Total DWSP Program	***$6,145,802***	***$5,000,000***

Drinking Water Source Protection
Fall 2024 Applications



Fall 2024 OWEB Grant Offering

Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Number 225-8016-24119
Applicant City of Port Orford
Project Name Port Orford Drinking Water Source Area Land Acquisition Reimbursement

County Curry
OWEB Request $415,735
Total Cost $817,133
Protective Instrument Fee Simple
Category Loan Repayment

Abstract Provided by Applicant

We are requesting funding to reimburse costs for a recently completed land acquisition in the City of Port Orford's Drinking Water Source Area intended to protect the water quality and quantity of our city's drinking water and our city's capacity to reliably provide drinking water.

(1) Location: Watershed of the North Fork Hubbard Creek, Drinking Water Source Area for the City of Port Orford.

(2) Project Need: Port Orford needs to secure funds to pay off the debt incurred (DEQ Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan) to buy a critical piece of land in our drinking water source area in order to continue city efforts to protect and reduce risk of contamination in its drinking water source area.

3) Proposed Work: Reimbursement for land acquisition costs for a 160-acre parcel of land that was under imminent threat of clear-cut harvest.

4) Project Partners: Port Orford Watershed Council, The Conservation Fund, Curry Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT), DEQ Drinking Water Protection Program, Bandon Dunes Charitable Foundation, CCD Business Development, Wild Rivers Land Trust

APPLICATION EVALUATION BY TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM

Strengths

- The transaction has been successfully completed, and the due diligence was generally sufficient. Review of title documentation did not identify any significant concerns for the protection of the drinking water source.
- The City of Port Orford had good technical support partners, such as Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts and The Conservation Fund, while conducting due diligence and closing on the property. Additionally, the City has previous experience in land transactions.
- The physical characteristics of this parcel put it at risk for erosion and landslides, highlighting its priority for purchase.

- North Fork Hubbard Creek is the City's sole operational source of drinking water, highlighting the priority of protecting this watershed.
- This purchase results in the City owning 65% of its Drinking Water Source Area, allowing it to control activities to minimize turbidity and protect drinking water.
- Urgency existed at the time of securing the Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan from DEQ to purchase the land and protect the intact forest on the property.
- The City demonstrated that the water intake has experienced direct negative impacts from intensive management of forestlands on steep slopes that resulted in erosion and associated turbidity. The City's water treatment system has a 3 nephelometric turbidity units (NTU) limit and one finished water tank. The City provided compelling data in its application indicating when it had to shut down the water intake due to turbidity.
- The City demonstrated economic distress in its application: the community served is small, rural, and disadvantaged, and has a seasonal influx of tourists that puts a strain on water system capacity during dry summer months.
- Already owning property in the watershed shows capacity and experience in managing forestlands for drinking water, including knowledge of issues and proven capacity to tackle them.
- The City's management plan was required by DEQ for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan. DEQ reviewed and approved the plan for nonpoint source pollution management. The plan is thoughtful and holistic, especially addressing the urgency of controlling gorse to reduce the risk of wildfire. The City mentioned in the plan the benefit of carbon sequestration provided by the forest. The plan is comprehensive and includes outside expertise as needed, including an intergovernmental agreement with the soil and water conservation district to manage and restore the land.

Concerns

- The review team did not identify any concerns.

Concluding Analysis

The review team was impressed by the City's history of watershed management. The need for this project was clearly articulated and justified in the application. The review team noted that the project exceeded evaluation criteria.

Review Team Ranking

Loan Repayment Category: 1 of 2

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommended Funding Amount

$415,735

Funding Conditions

No additional project-specific funding conditions beyond the Required Conditions described in Exhibit C of the grant agreement.

Fall 2024 OWEB Grant Offering

Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Number 225-8016-24159
Applicant Rhododendron Water Association
Project Name Henry Creek/RWA Watershed Protection
County Clackamas

OWEB Request $143,460
Total Cost $229,489
Protective Instrument Equitable Servitude
Category Loan Repayment

Abstract Provided by Applicant

Rhododendron Water Association (RWA), serves a population of ~1000 residents. Located on the western flanks of Mt. Hood, RWA's sole surface water source is Big Henry Creek, which flows through the 2.8 square mile Henry Creek watershed.

The watershed is primarily within the Mt. Hood National Forest, except for two privately owned parcels. A section of Henry Creek flows through these privately owned properties.

In April 2021, a 150-acre parcel of privately owned timberland was sold to Chilton Inc., a Washington-based timber operator. The sale closed in early May, 2021 and Chilton scheduled to clear-cut the property as early as the end of May or early June.

RWA had major concerns about protecting our sole water source. Since the logging and sale were so close together, RWA had to take rapid action to negotiate and establish larger riparian buffers with Chilton. RWA hired Sustainable Northwest, a consulting firm experienced in watershed preservation and retained Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt as legal representation. After considering many options and because time was of the essence, RWA ultimately purchased a perpetual Equitable Servitude (ES) from Chilton Inc. for $175,000.

Not having the available capital for the purchase, RWA secured a bridge loan from Craft3, which was used to make the purchase. RWA then secured a $100,000 loan from the OHA Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and $75,000 from a CoBank line of credit to pay back the bridge loan. The principal and interest associated with both the bridge loan and line of credit have been paid-off. RWA is in the process of repaying the Drinking Water RLF.

This grant will be used to pay-off the remaining balance of the state RLF, as well as recoup the costs associated with negotiating, securing, and financing the Equitable Servitude.

APPLICATION EVALUATION BY TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM

Strengths

- Review of title documentation did not identify any significant concerns on title for the protection of the drinking water source.

- The transaction has been successfully completed.
- The equitable servitude appears to be legally sound and is a perpetual agreement that runs with the land. Recourse exists in the agreement if the landowner defaults. The equitable servitude provides for a riparian buffer (150-foot buffer on south bank, and the entirety of the area across the creek) that is larger than what is required by the Oregon Forest Practices Act (FPA). The equitable servitude was put in place prior to the Private Forest Accords which further increased riparian buffers.
- Impacts to the intact riparian forest along Henry Creek were imminent, which highlights the urgency of the equitable servitude and the loans taken out by RWA to fund it.
- Henry Creek is the sole source of drinking water for RWA.
- RWA is a rural water supplier that serves a small community of less than 1,000 residents, demonstrating economic distress.
- The loan that RWA received from Oregon Health Authority and Business Oregon provided for 50/50 loan forgiveness, meaning that once RWA completed the purchase of the equitable servitude, half of the loan was forgiven. RWA was given this forgiveness option due to ratepayer susceptibility to financial hardship.
- RWA relied significantly on volunteer time to coordinate this project.

Concerns

- Due diligence for this project, such as research into title matters, was not fully adequate. Some aspects of the acquisition were done quickly because of the threat to the riparian forest.
- The protections are for 35 acres of a larger property; the protected acreage is only defined by legal description without survey or marking. This creates challenges in monitoring the boundary for adherence to the terms of the equitable servitude.
- The equitable servitude allows for annual monitoring access, but the ability to physically access the area of interest via road for inspection is in question.
- Aspects of the budget were initially unclear, due to the complexity of the multiple steps in the lending process.
- Given that the project is run by a volunteer board, RWA may need technical support to complete any additional requirements of the OWEB grant such as finalizing the baseline inventory documentation. It is unclear if historical partners are on board to support future needs.
- The equitable servitude prohibits any tree management activity on the property, which will constrain potential beneficial management such as thinning. The review team also had questions as to what kind of management could take place to prevent wildfire or to recover from wildfire, if it were to occur. RWA does not have any management rights in the agreement to lead beneficial actions, due to the equitable servitude having focused solely on protection.

- Reviewers raised a question about the application content regarding riparian buffer width required under Oregon FPA at the time of the transaction, indicating that legal protections from the State were larger than what was described in the application but still not as large as the buffer provided by the equitable servitude.
- RWA described its situation as "nearly identical" to that of a neighboring community that experienced significant impacts to its drinking water (i.e., turbidity, water availability) after private timber harvest, but did not provide quantitative data to support that assertion.
- The application lacked clarity with respect to who would be conducting monitoring of the equitable servitude.
- RWA did not make a connection between its project and the climate-related evaluation criteria.

Concluding Analysis

The review team recognized that RWA developed and carried out this project during a time of urgency to protect its sole source of drinking water. Balancing the concerns identified above with legislative intent of the Drinking Water Source Protection program to address loan repayment needs for projects that occurred prior to creation of this grant program, OWEB should work to incorporate funding conditions where possible to address identified concerns.

Review Team Ranking

Loan Repayment Category: 2 of 2

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommended Funding Amount

$155,460 – Includes $12,000 increase to account for survey and marking funding conditions (described below)

Funding Conditions

In addition to the Required Conditions described in Exhibit C of the grant agreement, RWA will be required to survey and mark the boundary of the equitable servitude to ensure long-term adherence to the agreement, if the landowner is amenable to allowing surveying and marking. RWA must provide documentation to OWEB of the landowner's response to the request. RWA will also be required to add purpose and procedures for annual monitoring of the equitable servitude into its standard operating procedures.

Fall 2024 OWEB Grant Offering

Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Number 225-8016-24163
Applicant Neskowin Regional Water District
Project Name Neskowin Regional Water District Source Water Area Land Acquisition
County Tillamook

OWEB Request $983,722
Total Cost $1,324,822
Protective Instrument Fee Simple
Category Non-Loan Repayment

Abstract Provided by Applicant

The Neskowin Regional Water District (NRWD or District), serving the community of Neskowin on the Oregon coast, seeks to protect the District's only source of drinking water, the Hawk Creek Watershed. Located just east of the town of Neskowin on the southwestern edge of Tillamook County, the NRWD proposes using these grant funds to purchase three additional parcels of land within the watershed totaling 121 acres that will adjoin the NRWDs previously purchased land. In addition to property already purchased by the NRWD, these new parcels will allow the district to steward these very sensitive lands for water quantity and quality for future generations. The NRWD believes that it has a unique opportunity to protect its entire source water area by acquiring properties currently managed as private industrial timberland. The NRWD and the Neskowin community believe that through stressors brought by climate change to our source water area, the transition to a forest managed for conservation purposes instead of industrial timber harvesting is necessary for our community to thrive. The District has partnered with the community of Neskowin, the North Coast Land Conservancy (NCLC), the Nestucca, Neskowin, & Sand Lake Watersheds Council (NNSLWC), MRM Forestry, the Rural Community Assistance Corporation, and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Siletz respectively to accomplish this goal. The District has also recently received a Drinking Water Source Protect Award from the Oregon Health Authority which was submitted with this application.

APPLICATION EVALUATION BY TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM

Strengths

- The budget and timeline for the due diligence steps are reasonable. NRWD has technical support from North Coast Land Conservancy, which adds capacity. NRWD has experience acquiring property in the watershed. Collectively, the team has a solid grasp of the transaction steps necessary to complete the purchase.
- NRWD completed an appraisal for one tax lot and used that value to extrapolate a per acre value for the other two tax lots, which is an acceptable method for informing purchase price at the application stage.

- The parcels that NRWD has identified for purchase have a high potential for erosion given the steep hillslopes, highlighting the significance of protecting them, as well as priority for purchase over other privately-owned parcels in the watershed. These parcels are also lower in the watershed, close to the water system intake.
- Urgency exists for this project given the development threat from a Measure 37 claim that allows up to four home sites, along with the Small Farm, Woodlot Zone (SFW-20).
- The community of Neskowin experiences high seasonal visitation in the summer, stressing its water system when water availability is the lowest.
- NRWD serves a small community with a limited number of ratepayers. Additionally, NRWD does not collect transient rental tax because it is not a city or county entity. Despite this, NRWD has been able to set aside funds every year from ratepayer dollars to meet land management needs, which is notable.
- NRWD has clear and strong partnerships with North Coast Land Conservancy, the landowner, the U.S. Forest Service, and a private forester.
- NRWD has experience managing a parcel in the watershed.
- The review team appreciated reading the letter of support from The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon.
- NRWD's long-term management plan is well written and covers the entire watershed, including the parcels in this application. The plan meets DEQ non-point source management goals and includes a focus on enhancing the forest and maintaining roads. The review team was especially impressed by NRWD's focus on how acquisition of these parcels and management for source water protection addresses climate change concerns given changing climate patterns on the coast and a small creek.
- The project adds to continuity of protected lands in the watershed, connecting to NRWD's currently owned parcel and adjacent U.S. Forest Service land that is Late Successional Reserve.
- The application maps were very clear.

Concerns

- Legal access to these parcels is complicated and will require further research by NRWD and partners to confirm it exists; they have begun the research and have a reasonable plan to resolve this issue.
- NRWD included surveying the boundary in the application narrative, but left it out of the budget and timeline. Intent around the survey is uncertain and needs to be clarified.

Concluding Analysis

NRWD brings experience in acquiring and managing property for source water protection, and has a clear due diligence plan, a strong team to complete the acquisition process, and a solid management plan. The parcels to be acquired are significant to the protection of Hawk Creek, and urgency exists for their acquisition. The review team noted that NRWD's application met or exceeded all of the evaluation criteria.

Review Team Ranking

Non-Loan Repayment Category: 1 of 6

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommended Funding Amount

$983,722

Funding Conditions

No additional project-specific funding conditions beyond the Required Conditions described in Exhibit C of the grant agreement.

Fall 2024 OWEB Grant Offering

Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Number 225-8016-24166
Applicant City of Reedsport
Project Name Source Water Protection for the City of Reedsport's Clear Lake Watershed

County Douglas
OWEB Request $1,494,000
Total Cost $1,597,745
Protective Instrument Fee Simple
Category Non-Loan Repayment

Abstract Provided by Applicant

The City of Reedsport seeks to protect and preserve the Clear Lake Watershed, the sole drinking water source for its residents. Located in coastal Douglas County, Oregon, Clear Lake supports one of the last unfiltered water treatment systems in the state. This is possible due to the intact forested habitat within the watershed providing exceptionally high source water quality. However, ~38% of the drinking water source area is privately owned and managed for intensive timber production. This poses a significant risk to water quality through activities such as road-building, logging, and post-harvest treatments, which can deliver sediments, pesticides, and fertilizers into surface water. Of particular concern is a 332.74-acre parcel that directly encompasses the northeastern arm of Clear Lake, an area identified as high priority for conservation due to erosion risks and potential contamination. In this project, the City of Reedsport proposes to acquire this priority parcel to ensure long-term source water protection in their drinking water source area. The work associated with this proposed project is to subdivide the parcel and to complete due diligence and legal review steps necessary for the city to purchase the 332.74 acre parcel from the willing seller. In addition to City of Reedsport staff, other key project partners include the Wild Rivers Land Trust, Trout Mountain Forestry, the DEQ Drinking Water Protection Program, and the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts.

APPLICATION EVALUATION BY TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM

Strengths

- The City of Reedsport has a solid grasp of the transaction steps needed to successfully complete this project. The City articulated a clear due diligence plan in its application with appropriate technical support from multiple partners, including Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts and Wild Rivers Land Trust.
- The City estimated purchase price by working with a local appraiser who used comparable sales to extrapolate a per acre value for the proposed parcel, which is an acceptable method for informing purchase price at the application stage.
- Protecting the parcel proposed for purchase is significant since it is the last piece of private industrial timberland adjacent to Clear Lake, so this transaction would remove the threat of intensive timber management and the related potential of erosion and

increased turbidity. The remainder of the land around the lake is already in public ownership.

- This watershed contains highly erodible soils and steep slopes, creating a turbidity risk. This turbidity risk is especially significant because the City has an unfiltered water system, one of the last remaining in the state. The water system cannot handle turbidity above 1 nephelometric turbidity unit (NTU). If the parcel were intensively logged, the City would potentially have to install a filtration system with a cost estimate of approximately $10 million.
- The current owner of the parcel is a timber investment management organization (TIMO) that does intensive timber management. The age of the tree stands on the parcel is 35+ years old (a typical harvest age), creating urgency for the City to purchase the property and protect the forest for multiple benefits rather than trying to restore the forest after impacts at a later date.
- The water system is impacted by a 30% influx in users during tourism season.
- Reedsport is an economically distressed community with a lower income population. The review team was impressed that despite the economic challenges, the City has prioritized protection of its sole drinking water source for multiple decades. It already owns over 200 acres within its Drinking Water Source Area.
- Over the last three years, the City has been transitioning toward a long-term management plan for the forests it currently manages that includes sustainable forest management. Previously, the City left forests under its ownership untouched, which has resulted in a somewhat dense monoculture condition. It now is transitioning to management that aims to create a structurally complex, multi-species forest. The City has contracted with Trout Mountain Forestry to develop the management plan. The City has expressed a strong commitment toward managing the forest for drinking water protection and is looking to establish partnerships to support and implement this management.
- With a lake as a water source, the risk of algal blooms from warmer temperatures is a notable climate impact that could be mitigated through protection and proper management.

Concerns

- This parcel includes privately held mineral rights. However, the City is aware of the steps required to resolve the title matter and has built the steps into the timeline and budget.
- Potential access issues including questions of both legal and physical access were not addressed in the application.
- The review team expressed some questions and concerns related to capacity for implementation of forest management. While the City already owns over 200 acres, it has not yet practiced active management of those lands to demonstrate forest management experience. At the same time, the City mentioned potential partnerships for this work, but has not yet solidified those.

Concluding Analysis

The review team was impressed by the City's long-term commitment to protecting its sole source of drinking water despite the community's economic constraints. This project is well-planned out and has appropriate technical support to complete the due diligence process. Urgency exists to protect existing forest for drinking water quality on this parcel, and prevent turbidity impacts to the City's unfiltered water system. The review team encourages the City to begin partnership building for long-term management of the parcel.

Review Team Ranking

Non-Loan Repayment Category: 2 of 6

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommended Funding Amount

$1,494,000

Funding Conditions

In addition to the Required Conditions described in Exhibit C of the grant agreement, the City will be required to account for research and resolution of legal and physical access in its timeline and project budget.

Fall 2024 OWEB Grant Offering

Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Number 225-8016-24164
Applicant City of Rockaway Beach
Project Name City of Rockaway Beach - Lower Jetty Creek Watershed
County Tillamook

OWEB Request $1,422,270
Total Cost $5,202,270
Protective Instrument Fee Simple
Category Non-Loan Repayment

Abstract Provided by Applicant

The proposed Lower Jetty Creek Watershed Acquisition is being submitted by the City of Rockaway Beach (the City), a 1,400-resident community in Tillamook County. This effort will support the acquisition of an 800-acres of priority forestland containing 595-acres of the Jetty Creek Watershed, the City's main surface water supply. The City and the current landowner, have engaged in discussions regarding watershed protection and land acquisition since early 2023.

The proposed fee simple acquisition includes the lower reaches of the Jetty Creek Watershed, which feeds directly into the City's water intake facility, and supports the appraisal and acquisition support for this effort. Additional partners who support and are engaged in this effort include Sustainable Northwest, North Coast Land Conservancy and more.

Currently, the Jetty Creek is experiencing consistent water supply shortages during the summer months along with water quality issues due to elevated turbidity following intense storm events. These impacts stem from the structure of the forest as a property focused on timber production, rather than water quality and diverse forest structure.

Once acquired, the City intends to manage the forestland with a focus on forest stewardship for watershed protection. Maintaining a forest structure that reduces potential risk of sedimentation, while increasing the long-term water supply in Jetty Creek. This will ensure that the City will remain able to provide clean water to the customers, while reducing its reliance on its back up water supplies.

The property is owned by a Timber Investment Management Organization. Without funding to support the City's vision, the property will continue to be managed for industrial forest or highest and best use objectives. The current management approach prioritizes shorter rotation harvest cycles, with limited species and age class diversity, limiting its potential for watershed, ecological, and community benefit.

APPLICATION EVALUATION BY TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM

Strengths

- Review of title documentation did not identify any concerns that would impact the protection of the drinking water source. The City of Rockaway Beach is aware of the due diligence steps that remain to complete the project and has strong, existing partnerships is in place with Sustainable Northwest and North Coast Land Conservancy to provide technical capacity.
- The City estimated purchase price using comparable sales by the seller in the region, which is an acceptable method for informing purchase price at the application stage. The City has a letter of intent in place with the seller that outlines the framework for a transaction, demonstrating project readiness.
- The seller has been amenable to conservation activities in the watershed, including a current instream restoration project funded by OWEB that is being implemented by the application partners. The City expressed a commitment to continue restoration work on this property.
- Turbidity has been an issue in Jetty Creek for years. Previously, the high turbidity and corresponding need to chemically treat the water has resulted in disinfectant byproducts in the drinking water supply. Disinfectant byproducts are a significant health concern, increasing the urgency of the project.
- In recent years, the City has issued water curtailment warnings and has had to supplement its Jetty Creek supply from nearby wells, highlighting the significance of purchasing this property to manage it for drinking water protection.
- The seller, a timber investment management organization (TIMO), is reaching the end of its investment period for this property. More than 100 acres of the property are nearing harvestable age. These factors create urgency for the City to purchase the property before it is sold to another buyer that may not have the same conservation goals.
- Rockaway Beach is a small, rural community that experiences high seasonal visitation in the summer, stressing its water system when water availability is the lowest.
- The community has been focused on this watershed for a decade, providing a local grassroots push to protect it.
- The City has been awarded funding from Oregon Health Authority to complete a forest stewardship plan/long-term management plan. Reviewers noted the importance of the management plan including forest stewardship that centers water quality management (rather than simply a “no touch” approach).
- Carbon sequestration potential exists in this forest, especially within the young stands. Additional planning to achieve this will be needed by the City in its forest management plan if carbon sequestration is one of its objectives.

Concerns

- The ownership structure of the seller is complex, and the City needs to confirm who has signatory authority from the seller's perspective prior to closing.
- The City did not identify the need for partitioning one of the parcels in its application.
- The City has applied for match funding from the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program and is awaiting a funding decision. The City has contingency plans ready if that funding is not awarded.
- While the City has experience managing small properties, managing 800 acres will require a significant increase in capacity. Questions and concerns exist around ongoing staff capacity, long-term partnerships, and funding for managing the property.

Concluding Analysis

The review team appreciated the ambitious scope and scale of this project. The City and its partners are well-prepared to work through the property acquisition steps. The City clearly demonstrated the need and urgency for this project in its application materials. The primary concern is around long-term management capacity. The review team noted that this risk should be taken into context, however, given the high probability of the applicant's successful acquisition of a major portion of the watershed.

Review Team Ranking

Non-Loan Repayment Category: 3 of 6

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommended Funding Amount

$1,422,270

Funding Conditions

In addition to the Required Conditions described in Exhibit C of the grant agreement, the City will be required to add partitioning tax lot 2800 to its timeline and account for it in the project budget.

Fall 2024 OWEB Grant Offering

Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Number 225-8016-24165
Applicant City of The Dalles
Project Name The Dalles Municipal Watershed Property Acquisition Project
County Wasco

OWEB Request $675,000
Total Cost $2,745,800
Protective Instrument Fee Simple
Category Non-Loan Repayment

Abstract Provided by Applicant

City of The Dalles seeks to acquire for perpetual protection of water quality approximately 3,600 acres of forest land within and adjacent to The Dalles Municipal Watershed. The Watershed is the source for 80% of the City's annual water supply. This property to be acquired is currently owned by Lupine Forest LLC, an affiliate of The Conservation Fund, which acquired subject property from SDS Lumber Co. The property is located immediately upstream from the City's raw water intake, was formerly used for cattle grazing and industrial forestry, and is not currently protected from associated practices including use of herbicides. Lupine Forest indicates its intention to sell the land on the open market unless the City is able to secure purchase. The City identifies the subject property as critical for protection water quality within the municipal watershed; acquisition and perpetual protection of privately-owned properties within the Watershed are among the City's water quality protection strategies. City-owned lands are managed to promote forest health and protect water quality using non-chemical sustainable forestry and erosion-control techniques consistent with the City's Watershed Stewardship Plan. Sustainable forestry considers impacts from climate change including forest fires that heighten the threat to municipal drinking water supply. Land value is estimated at $2.7 million. The City requests this OWEB DWSP grant of $675,000 to serve as non-federal match for a $2 million request to USFS Forest Legacy Program; this FLP application was the highest ranked project in Oregon in 2024 and also ranked nationally. FLP funding is expected in 2025. The City would provide remaining match. The City is receiving informal guidance from Columbia Land Trust, which works closely with The Conservation Fund. If awarded funding, the City would close sale within 18 months. Stands of Oregon white oak (Quercus garryana) will be protected through a conservation easement.

APPLICATION EVALUATION BY TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM

Strengths

- The City of The Dalles has already conducted many steps beyond those required at the DWSP application stage, including having an option agreement in place with the seller, completion of an appraisal to determine purchase price, and an initial Environmental

Site Assessment (ESA). The ESA was for a larger area than the parcels for purchase, and so the City plans to conduct a more-focused ESA.

- The application was well-written, with risks and benefits to the watershed clearly described. The rationale for the project connects well to the Source Water Assessment, addressing issues such as erodible soils and mitigating fire risks and impacts.
- The City intends to use surface water from this South Fork Mill Creek Drinking Water Source Area for aquifer storage and recovery (ASR), injecting the treated water into City wells during winter months to supplement the water supply during summer drought months. ASR requires a clean surface water supply.
- This is the last piece of the City's drinking watershed that is not in public management, and so its purchase will solidify public ownership of the watershed.
- Some of the forest stands are 10 years old, which is an important age for management. The current owner, Lupine Forest LLC, an affiliate of The Conservation Fund, does not actively manage the property; this highlights the need for a new owner to manage the stands for source water protection.
- The current owner intends to sell on the open market if this transaction does not happen, presenting a degree of urgency; yet the seller has indicated flexibility with the timeline.
- Wildfire and drought risk exist in this watershed. The City has been proactive at addressing these risks and building partnerships with the Wasco Soil and Water Conservation District, U.S. Forest Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service, among others, to support the work.
- The City already manages 4,000 acres adjacent to these parcels for drinking water protection, demonstrating experience and stewardship capacity for land management.
- A long-term management plan is in place for the watershed. It is thorough and comprehensive, addresses many key issues well, and includes partnerships. The plan includes management for oaks on the property.
- In its application and management plan, the City thoughtfully addressed climate issues, including wildfire impacts to water quality, wildfire risk reduction, drought threats, carbon sequestration/carbon market, and protecting a snowpack fed system.
- The City demonstrated economic distress because it operates a relatively small water system, has a need for large infrastructure updates, and serves a community with an average income slightly below the state median average income.

Concerns

- The City did not acknowledge in its application title encumbrances related to minerals, coal, timber, and oil and gas, and did not propose a plan for the associated due diligence steps to understand and resolve these matters. The review team was concerned with the lack of awareness of these title issues and lack of plan to address them, given the potential impact that the uses could have on drinking water protection.

- The review team had questions about the extent of the City's technical support to conduct the remaining and overlooked due diligence steps, especially during a staff transition. The application lists only informal guidance from a technical partner.
- The City's appraisal for the property was recently completed (after application submission) and resulted in a higher-than-expected price and a funding gap.
- Match funding from the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program is not yet secured, but the City's application has ranked highly. The City does not have a contingency plan if Forest Legacy funding is not awarded.

Concluding Analysis

The review team appreciated the City's well-written application and clear arguments for protecting these parcels to bolster source water protection. The City demonstrated strong experience in managing large-scale watershed properties, including a thoughtful and holistic management plan. The City's due diligence process is further along than required at the application stage, showing project readiness. However, the lack of awareness around mineral and timber rights on title was a significant concern for the review team.

Review Team Ranking

Non-Loan Repayment Category: 4 of 6

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommended Funding Amount

$528,813 – Reduced amount based on available funding

Funding Conditions

In addition to the Required Conditions described in Exhibit C of the grant agreement, the City will be required to work towards resolution of title matters, including conducting due diligence around mineral and coal potential and researching the status of oil and gas leases and timber rights. These due diligence steps will need to be accounted for in the timeline and project budget.

Fall 2024 OWEB Grant Offering

Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Number 225-8016-24161
Applicant City of Seaside
Project Name City of Seaside Drinking Watershed
County Clatsop

OWEB Request $774,115
Total Cost $979,115
Protective Instrument Fee Simple
Category Non-Loan Repayment

Abstract Provided by Applicant

The City of Seaside, located in Clatsop County, is requesting $774,115 in grant funding to acquire a parcel of land in the South Fork Source Water Area, the city's primary water source. The property is valued at $907,459, with the city contributing $200,000 in matching funds demonstrating the city's strong commitment to protecting this critical resource.

This project represents a unique opportunity to secure the long-term health and sustainability of our water system, a goal that would not be achievable without the support of this grant. The acquisition will protect a critical stretch of the South Fork of the Necanicum River, safeguarding water quality and ensuring that natural flow patterns remain undisturbed despite growing water demand during peak tourist seasons.

This acquisition will play a pivotal role in mitigating the risk of water shortages, particularly during drought periods. By expanding protected lands, the city will prevent development and reduce the potential for water contamination, significantly lowering the need for costly treatment measures. Strengthening riparian buffers and preserving natural vegetation within the watershed will filter sediments and further enhance water quality. These actions align with Seaside's broader vision of achieving a resilient, sustainable water supply that meets the needs of both current residents and future generations.

The City is collaborating with the North Coast Land Conservancy (NCLC) and MRM Forestry, who will manage the land transaction and provide sustainable forest management expertise. Following the acquisition, Seaside will take on stewardship of the land, ensuring its ongoing protection. This partnership, made possible through this grant opportunity, reflects Seaside's commitment to preserving its natural resources while reducing financial burdens on taxpayers. By investing in this project today, the city is securing its water future for decades to come.

APPLICATION EVALUATION BY TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM

Strengths

- Review of title documentation did not identify any concerns that would impact the protection of the drinking water source.

- The City of Seaside's purchase price estimation was well-supported. The City worked with a forester to determine timber value based on timber inventory data from landowner; they also used recent appraisals in the area and current log markets to determine value. This is an acceptable method for informing purchase price at the application stage.
- The City is working with North Coast Land Conservancy, a strong technical partner; the team has a solid grasp of the due diligence steps required to successfully complete the project and clearly demonstrated it in the application.
- It is a positive that the City is looking to increase ownership within its Drinking Water Source Area, and that that ownership would be contiguous.
- While recent timber harvest makes the project less urgent, it makes the land cheaper now, given younger tree stands, than it will be in the future as the forest ages.
- The City has a secondary water source, but it is of lower quality than this primary water source on the South Fork Necanicum River which increases the significance of protecting the primary water source.
- Seaside has extreme seasonal variability in population size due to its prominence as a tourism destination, which presents significant challenges to the water system.
- The new city council has provided a direction of sustainability for forest management.
- The City has experience managing forest lands and has brought experienced partners to the project, including North Coast Land Conservancy and MRM Forestry who will be updating the long-term management plan.
- The City indicated in the application a desire to manage for older, more mature trees, as well as carbon sequestration.

Concerns

- The City has been able to access the property through an access easement that benefits its current adjacent ownership, but will need to secure legal access for the new parcel.
- The project area has been harvested recently, resulting in forest stands that are very young. This reduces the significance and urgency of the project.
- The young stands will require a significant amount of management and maintenance to achieve the desired condition for older stands that the City is intending.
- The management plan submitted with the application is more focused on timber revenue production than on sustainability and source water protection, which is a significant concern. While the City indicated it would be updating the plan, it did not include in the application an acknowledgment or discussion of the change of policy direction from previous management practices.
- While there is some turbidity in the watershed, it does not appear to be a significant impediment for the water system.

Concluding Analysis

The review team appreciated the strong technical partnerships that the City has formed for the project, and the clear plan to complete the necessary due diligence steps to achieve a successful transaction. However, specific concerns existed with respect to lack of urgency due to the young stands and the inclusion of the timber revenue-focused forest management plan with the application materials.

Review Team Ranking

Non-Loan Repayment Category: 5 of 6

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommended Funding Amount

$0 – Falls below funding line

Funding Conditions

N/A

Fall 2024 OWEB Grant Offering

Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Number 225-8016-24162
Applicant City of Baker City
Project Name Marble Creek
County Baker

OWEB Request $237,500
Total Cost $250,000
Protective Instrument Fee Simple
Category Non-Loan Repayment

Abstract Provided by Applicant

Baker City continuously strives to look for opportunities to preserve and protect our most precious commodity, source water. There has long been a keen interest in the acquisition of a parcel of privately owned land within the boundaries of our Baker City Watershed. The parcel is located near the intersection of our pipeline access road with Marble Creek Pass Road. More particularly, the parcel is described as tax lot 200, state tax map 09s38ed01. This parcel is in close proximity to our primary watershed transmission pipeline as well as one of our primary ground water diversions. This parcel is the site of previous mining operations. Baker City had been in discussion with the owner's representative for several years in attempts to reach a satisfactory purchase price. With no progress to that effect, the effort was stalled. In mid-2023, the representative indicated that the seller's intent was to list the parcel for sale. The potential risks of continued private ownership could include source water contamination, resumption of mining activities, unfavorable future development, and closure of a section of the Marble Creek Pass Road that traverses the parcel with no clear easement or designated right of way. This road provides access to a good portion of our watershed and is critical to our ability to access and maintain our water sources. The proposed purchase by Baker City was supported by the US Forest Service and Baker County, both of which recognize the importance of source water protection and continued access to this area of the watershed. After discussion with the Baker City Council, city staff was directed to purchase the parcel at the asking price of $250,000.

APPLICATION EVALUATION BY TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM

Strengths

- The transaction was successfully completed.
- Given that the property is zoned for mining, there is an inherent threat to water quality.
- There was an urgency to the purchase since the seller intended to list the property for sale on the open market.
- Baker City is a small, rural community with a majority of residents in financial hardship, demonstrating economic distress for the City.
- The review team appreciated the City's approach to holistically managing the watershed and its partnership with the U.S. Forest Service. The adjacent fuels reduction work is a benefit to the watershed.

Concerns

- There appeared to be a disconnect between what the applicant wrote in the application and what is included in the due diligence, such as title encumbrances that may need further investigation and inconsistencies with the access descriptions. The City stated in the application that the road is public, but also included in the urgency statement a need to protect access to the watershed. Additional clarity on road access and management would have been helpful.
- The City did not complete an appraisal prior to purchasing the property and would be required to do so if funded to meet DWSP Grant Program requirements.
- No environmental site assessment (ESA) was conducted prior to purchasing the property, which is especially concerning due to the mining history of the site. If funded, the City would be required to conduct an ESA to meet DWSP Grant Program requirements. The City did not acknowledge the need for an ESA or include this in its timeline or budget.
- Project justification was primarily focused on infrastructure needs and access rather than on source water protection. The City did not provide clear information to demonstrate confirmed hydrologic connection between this property and the spring-sourced drinking water supply. Additional clarity would have been helpful to explain importance of this project relative to grant program intent.
- While important fuels management work is planned throughout the watershed, this parcel is not a critical piece of that.
- The application maps lacked key details to communicate project elements.
- The long-term management plan included with the application is 10 years old and has a 10-year timeline. The City did not address plans to update that plan or to include the new parcel in it. A long-term management plan is a requirement of this program.

Concluding Analysis

The review team recognized the value of purchasing the remaining private parcel in the City's drinking watershed and the need to ensure mining activities do not resume on the site. However, significant concerns existed with respect to multiple aspects of due diligence (including lack of an ESA) and inconsistencies between statements in the application and what appears in title documentation. In general, the application lacked clarity and did not make a compelling case for source water protection.

Review Team Ranking

Non-Loan Repayment Category: 6 of 6

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommended Funding Amount

$0 – Falls below funding line

Funding Conditions N/A

Attachment D. DWSP Grants Required Conditions

(This document is Exhibit C from the DWSP Grant Agreement.)

In addition to other requirements specifically provided for in the Agreement, the disbursement of the Grant Funds is further conditioned on:

1. **Project-Specific Conditions**. Grant Funds will not be disbursed under this Agreement until the following Project-specific conditions have been fulfilled to the full satisfaction of OWEB.
    A. **Initial Conditions.** The following initial conditions must be satisfied before OWEB will review due diligence items or reimburse costs associated with the secondary conditions or standard conditions below.
        i. Grantee meets with OWEB Project Manager within sixty (60) days from the Effective Date to: (i) confirm roles and responsibilities; (ii) agree on preferred methods for sharing information; (iii) discuss approaches to addressing Project challenges; and (iv) address other Project matters that would benefit from early discussions between Grantee and OWEB.
        ii. [INCLUDE ii FOR PROJECTS WITH LOTTERY REVENUE BOND FUNDING] Grantee provides to OWEB Project Manager within sixty (60) days from the Effective Date a Spending Plan that outlines an estimate of grant expenses by month.
        iii. Grantee participates in regularly scheduled Project Update Meetings with OWEB staff.
        iv. [INSERT ADDITIONAL INITIAL PROJECT-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY OWEB]
    B. **Secondary Conditions.** OWEB will review due diligence items and reimburse costs associated with the following secondary conditions only after Grantee has satisfied the initial conditions above.
        i. [INSERT SECONDARY PROJECT-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY OWEB]
        ii. [INCLUDE ii FOR PROJECTS THAT REQUIRE A LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT PLAN] Grantee agrees to develop or modify a "Long-Term Management Plan", as defined in OAR 695-048-0020, for the planned future management and stewardship of the land for the benefit of drinking water pursuant to a Protective Instrument and that is intended to carry out the purposes of ORS 448.370 and is consistent with guidance established by OWEB. The Long-Term Management Plan includes, but is not limited to, proposed restoration activities, strategies for monitoring, maintaining, managing, and improving the Property, including providing signage, controlling access, enforcing use restrictions, and resolving violations. Grantee will complete a Long-Term Management Plan for the Property prior to closing and in accordance applicable Conditions and DWSP Guidance for Long-Term Management Plans. The Long-Term

Management Plan will be subject to OWEB approval, which will not be unreasonably withheld.

2. **Standard Conditions**. Grant Funds will not be disbursed under this Agreement until the following standard conditions have been fulfilled to the full satisfaction of OWEB, except as allowed by OAR 695-048-0160(3) which allows for the distribution of funds prior to transaction closing for staff costs and due diligence activities specified in OAR 695-048-0100 and included in the Approved Budget. OWEB will review due diligence items and reimburse costs associated with the standard conditions only after Grantee has satisfied the initial conditions above.
    A. Grantee obtains: (i) all reasonably necessary Property information (the "Property Information") for OWEB to complete a due diligence review of the Project, including, Property Information in the Property Seller's possession; and (ii) permissions from the Property Seller, as necessary, to release Property Information, regardless of the source, to OWEB and other funding entities. Property Information may include, but is not limited to: appraisals; title reports; environmental site assessments; surveys; water rights documentation; rights of first refusal; option agreements; purchase and sale agreements; leases; licenses; rental agreements; permits; easements; security instruments; UCC financing statements; fixture filings; documents pertaining to litigation, encroachments, disputes (including boundary line disputes), or prescriptive rights; a description of any work performed on or use made of the Property by parties other than the Property Seller within one hundred eighty (180) days from the Effective Date; and other documents and information that OWEB determines are reasonably necessary to review before disbursing Grant Funds. Upon written request of Grantee or the Property Seller, OWEB agrees to treat Property Information as confidential, to the extent permitted by the Oregon Public Records Law, ORS 192.311-192.478. OWEB may disclose Property Information that is subject to a confidentiality request if it determines that disclosure is reasonably necessary as part of its due diligence review process, or if it is ordered to do so pursuant to Public Records Law. OWEB will not be responsible for a breach of confidentiality by other entities that OWEB is reasonably expected to share the Property Information with as part of the grant administration process.
    B. Grantee obtains, if deemed necessary by OWEB, reasonable closing date extensions for the purpose of providing OWEB with adequate time to determine that Grantee has met all requirements under this Agreement.
    C. Grantee fully complies with the intent of ORS 35.500-35.530 (Relocation of Displaced Persons), and OWEB requirements related to said provisions of law, in the event that residential or business tenants will be displaced as a result of the acquisition of the Protective Instrument.

D. [INCLUDE D FOR ESTATE IN FEE SIMPLE ABSOLUTE PROJECTS] Grantee imposes title restrictions on the Property consistent with the Notice of Grant Requirements in Exhibit H of this agreement.

E. OWEB, by the closing date specified in Exhibit D, approves of the legal and financial terms of the acquisition of the Protective Instrument, including, but not limited to:

   i. The acquisition agreement (e.g., option, purchase and sale agreement, etc.) and the agreement to transfer the Protective Instrument to another party, if planned.

   ii. The purchase price for an estate in fee simple absolute and conservation easement acquisitions shall be based on an appraisal and review appraisal completed in accordance with applicable appraisal standards, including but not limited to [REMOVE "but not limited to" FOR PROJECTS WITH LOTTERY REVENUE BOND FUNDING] the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice. Other methods of substantiating the purchase price conducted by an independent third-party entity may be accepted at the discretion of OWEB for all other Protective Instruments. A third-party demonstration of market value of the Protective Instrument is not required for loan repayments.

   iii. The Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment, if required, as well as additional investigative reports and action plans resulting from the Phase 1 Assessment, if required.

   iv. The Protective Instrument survey, if required.

   v. The Protective Instrument Seller's vesting deed.

   vi. The baseline inventory completed for the Protective Instrument, if required.

   vii. The water rights, if applicable.

   viii. Documented access rights to the Protective Instrument, including a clear depiction of the access on a map provided by Grantee.

   ix. The planning and zoning circumstances associated with the Property.

   x. The legal description of the Protective Instrument.

   xi. The warranty deed for an estate in fee simple absolute transaction, the easement deed for a conservation easement acquisition, or the covenant, deed restriction, equitable servitude, or other similar agreement.

   xii. The condition of title and any applicable title insurance policy, including specific exceptions to the policy, with OWEB's approval based on review of an assessment, including a map, of the exceptions provided by Grantee.

   xiii. Escrow documents including settlement statements.

   xiv. A title report dated within sixty (60) days of the closing date.

   xv. The matching contribution.

xvi. Grantee's demonstrated compliance with applicable federal and state laws regarding relocation of displaced persons, including but not limited to requirements contained in ORS 35.510, as may be revised from time to time.

xvii. Other conditions that OWEB deems reasonably necessary as a result of OWEB due diligence review efforts after the Agreement has been signed by the Parties.

F. OWEB's approval of the legal and financial terms of the items listed under condition 2(E) above is solely for the purpose of disbursing Grant Funds under this Agreement. OWEB's approval does not constitute a legal opinion, representation or warranty as to the enforceability of the Protective Instrument or the financial soundness or adequacy of the terms under which it is acquired.

Attachment E. DWSP Notice of Grant Requirements for Fee Simple Projects

After recording, return to:
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Attn: Acquisitions and Special Programs
Re: OWEB Grant No. _____
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360
Salem, OR 97301-1290

NOTICE OF GRANT REQUIREMENTS

(ORS 448.370(7))

This Notice of Grant Requirements (NOGR) complies with OAR 695-048-0030(3) and is entered into by and between_____ ("Grantee") and the State of Oregon, acting by and through its Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB).

Property Legal Description; OWEB Grant: Grantee acquired the _____ property, described on Exhibit A and depicted on Exhibit B, attached hereto (the "Property"), with grant funds (the "Grant Funds") provided by OWEB under OWEB Grant No. _____to protect the Property in perpetuity through the acquisition of fee simple title and to enable protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of the Property for the benefit of the Grantee's drinking water source (the "OWEB Grant"). A copy of the OWEB Grant is kept on file at the OWEB Office at 775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360, Salem, Oregon 97301-1290.

OWEB Grant Objectives; Terms: The OWEB Grant objectives and terms demonstrating how this NOGR will meet those objectives are provided on Exhibit C, attached hereto.

Grantee's Obligations: Grantee shall do the following to comply with this NOGR:

- Monitor the Property, at least annually, to ensure the objectives of the OWEB Grant continue to be met;
- Repay the Grant Funds to OWEB if Grantee fails to enforce the terms of this NOGR; and
- Not dispose of, transfer, encumber, modify, assign, or convey any interest in the Property without the consent of OWEB [INSERT IF LOTTERY BOND PROJECT: and the Department of Administrative Services "DAS"]. Grantee shall make requests for consent in writing to OWEB. The approval of OWEB [INSERT IF LOTTERY BOND PROJECT: and DAS], if granted, will be provided in the form of written instructions as to acceptable terms and conditions, including OWEB Grant reimbursement instructions, if required.

Equitable Servitude; Effect: The Parties intend for this NOGR to be interpreted and treated as an equitable servitude under Oregon law. Accordingly, this NOGR has the following effects: (a) touches and concerns the Property; (b) runs with the Property in perpetuity; (c) binds and benefits the Property

through protection, restoration, and/or enhancement; (d) inures to the benefit of Grantee's drinking water source and lands and waterways owned by the State of Oregon; (e) binds and is obligatory upon Grantee's heirs, successors, and assigns; and (f) benefits OWEB's successors and assigns.

Access: Grantee shall provide OWEB and its designees with sufficient legal access to the Property, given reasonable notice, for the purpose of compliance inspections.

The effective date of this NOGR is the date on which it is recorded in the records of _____ County, Oregon.

(Signatures on following page)

State of Oregon, acting by and through its Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board:

Signature: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____

STATE OF OREGON)
) SS
COUNTY OF MARION)

This instrument was acknowledged before me on _____, _____by _____ as _____ of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

_____
Notary Public for Oregon
My commission expires:

[INSERT NAME OF GRANTEE]

Signature: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____

STATE OF OREGON)
) SS
COUNTY OF _____)

This instrument was acknowledged before me on _____, _____by _____ as _____, of _____.

_____
Notary Public for Oregon
My commission expires:

EXHIBIT A
LEGAL DESCRIPTION

EXHIBIT B
PROPERTY MAP

EXHIBIT C
OWEB GRANT OBJECTIVES; TERMS

OWEB Drinking Water Source Protection Grant Program

2025 Legislative Report

In June 2023, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2010 that, combined with other legislation, allocated $5 million to establish the Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) Grant Program at the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) using General Funds ($1M) and Lottery Revenue Bonds ($4M).

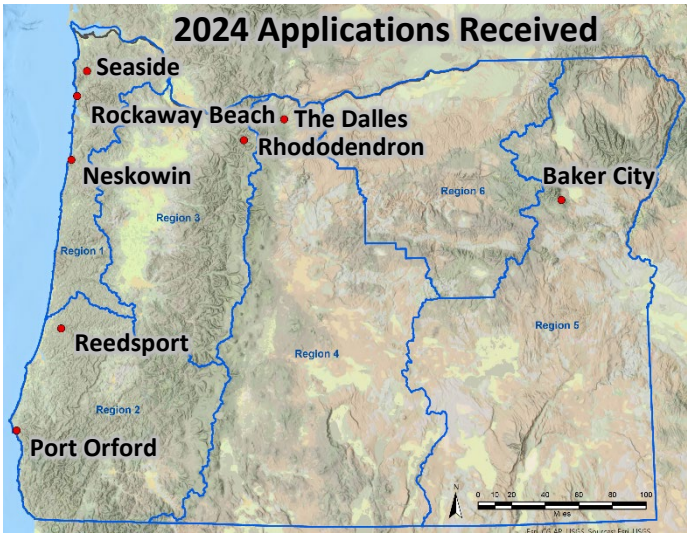
Through the DWSP Grant Program, OWEB provides grants to public water suppliers to protect, restore, or enhance sources of drinking water through land conservation and protection. Grants can be for forward-looking transactions or for loan repayment or reimbursement of past transactions. More details on program rules, administration, and guidelines can be found in Oregon Administrative Rules 695-048 and on the program webpage.

Program Stand-Up

OWEB successfully completed the steps to stand up this new program prior to the bond sale scheduled in spring 2025 that provides most of the program's grant funding. After the passage of HB 2010, OWEB rapidly convened a Rulemaking Advisory Committee, which met six times in the first half of 2024 to develop program rules. Concurrently, OWEB worked closely with Department of Administrative Services and Department of Justice to learn the requirements of administering the agency's first-ever allocation of Lottery Revenue Bonds. Following the OWEB Board's adoption of program rules, OWEB developed informational materials and program guidance for prospective applicants. OWEB conducted a significant amount of program outreach, including developing relationships with a new set of customers – public water suppliers. Considerable collaboration with other agencies including Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Health Authority, Business Oregon, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency made the program development process efficient and effective.

Program Staffing

To administer the program, OWEB received a limited-duration position for the 2023-25 biennium. The Governor's Recommended Budget includes continuity for this position into the 2025-27 biennium as the workload for upcoming grant awards will extend well into the next biennium.



Projects Recommended for Funding

The first grant application cycle of the DWSP Grant Program closed in December 2024. Before the application deadline, OWEB consulted with each prospective applicant to answer questions and provide feedback on the direction of the grant application. OWEB received eight applications from across the state requesting a total of $6.1 million. OWEB convened a Technical Review Team to evaluate and rank applications. OWEB staff recommended six projects for funding based on evaluations and available resources.

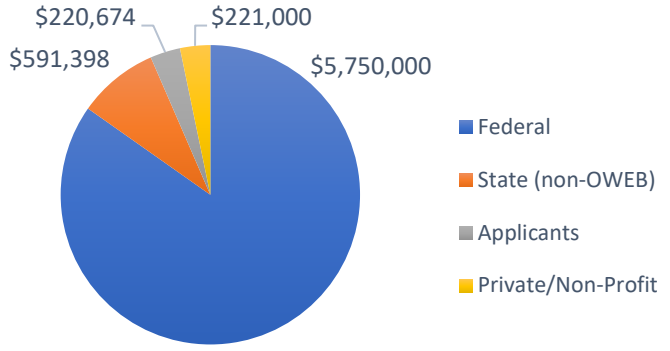
The OWEB Board will make award decisions at its April 22-23, 2025 meeting. After that, OWEB will work with grantees to enter into grant agreements. Grantees will be expected to close land transactions within 18 months of the funding award. The bond sale is scheduled to close in April 2025, which aligns well with the grant award timeline.

LOAN REPAYMENT CATEGORY					
Rank	Applicant Name	Pop. Served	County	Grant Request	Funding Rec.
1	City of Port Orford	954	Curry	$415,735	$415,735
2	Rhododendron Water Association	1,000	Clackamas	$143,460	$155,460

NON-LOAN REPAYMENT CATEGORY					
Rank	Applicant Name	Pop. Served	County	Grant Request	Funding Rec.
1	Neskowin Regional Water District	1,200	Tillamook	$983,722	$983,722
2	City of Reedsport	4,784	Douglas	$1,494,000	$1,494,000
3	City of Rockaway Beach	2,558	Tillamook	$1,422,270	$1,422,270
4	City of The Dalles	13,500	Wasco	$675,000	$528,813
5	City of Seaside	7,084	Clatsop	$774,115	$0
6	City of Baker City	9,965	Baker	$237,500	$0

Leveraged Resources

Legislative intent for the DWSP grant program included the opportunity to leverage outside funding sources. From projects recommended for funding, $6.7 million has been offered as match and leverage toward the $5 million of DWSP Grant Program funds. This far exceeds the 5% cash or in-kind match requirement in program rules, which was established so that match would not be a barrier for under-resourced communities.



Projects Currently in Development

Given the uncertainty about future funding, water suppliers currently are not developing DWSP grant proposals. Nonetheless, there is demand for the program, as described in the next section.

Estimate of Future Program Demand

A survey of public water suppliers conducted by OWEB in June 2024 indicated potential demand for as much as $15 million to protect drinking water sources in the 2025-27 biennium and at least an additional $10 million in future biennia. These numbers are rough estimates for the timeframes listed given the uncertainty about cost and timing of land transactions, as well as the capacity needed for applicants and their partners to conduct due diligence.

Recommendations for Program Changes

While the first cycle of the DWSP Grant Program has been effectively implemented, opportunities for program refinement exist. OWEB will survey parties engaged in the program, and has already identified the following areas for improvement:

- Refine the grant application.
- Provide increased clarity around required documentation at the application stage.
- If rulemaking is reopened in the future, consider streamlining evaluation criteria.

For more information, please contact:

Eric Hartstein, *OWEB Senior Policy Coordinator,* eric.hartstein@oweb.oregon.gov, 503.910.6201.

Audrey Squires, *OWEB Drinking Water Source Protection Specialist,* audrey.l.squires@oweb.oregon.gov, 503-798-6337.

This report can be found online at: *www.oregon.gov/oweb/resources/Pages/Publications.aspx*

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item N

Natural and Working Lands Program Preview

Board Meeting April 22-23, 2025

Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360
Salem OR 97301-1290
www.oregon.gov/oweb
(503) 986-0178

Agenda Item N supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority #2, engage the diversity of Oregonians in watershed enhancement work and priority #5, increase connection of urban and working lands to watershed health.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Alexa Schmidt, Water and Climate Coordinator
Taylor Larson, Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program Coordinator
Renee Davis, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager

SUBJECT: Agenda Item N – Natural and Working Lands Program Preview
April 22-23, 2025, Board Meeting

I. Introduction

In early 2024, the Oregon Climate Action Commission (OCAC) awarded $2.25 million to OWEB to incentivize natural climate solutions through the Natural and Working Lands (NWL) fund. Of this funding, $1.5 million is allocated for Open Solicitation grants and $750,000 for Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) for the development and implementation of Conservation Management Plans, although these allocations may need to be adjusted based on program demand. This is an informational only item. At the April board meeting, staff will provide an overview of this program in preparation for board action and grant awards at the July meeting.

II. Background

The $2.25 million that OWEB received is part of a larger $10 million fund that was established by House Bill (HB) 3409 to provide incentives and technical assistance to help landowners, Tribes, land managers, and environmental justice communities adopt practices that support natural climate solutions. OWEB serves as the fiscal agent for the NWL fund, and the Oregon Climate Action Commission allocates and oversees the use of the funds.

III. Progress to Date, Including Engagement Process

Prior to launching the Open Solicitation and OAHP grant solicitations, OWEB committed to doing outreach and engagement with a focus on engaging Tribes and environmental justice communities. From September-December 2024, OWEB staff conducted a public engagement process, including a survey, listening sessions, and one-on-one conversations to inform the grant offerings.

This engagement process revealed strong support for the priorities outlined in HB3409, including that a diversity of landowners and land managers are able to participate in natural

climate solutions and that the funds should optimize the social, health, ecological, climate resilience, or economic benefits of natural climate solutions. The engagement process also highlighted key opportunities for OWEB to clarify the evaluation criteria for applications submitted for these offerings, expand eligible practices, and modify the application template to solicit projects in line with the environmental justice related goals of HB 3409. This feedback has been crucial in designing offerings that are responsive to community input and meet the intent of the legislation.

As a result of the engagement process, OWEB has included as eligible practices for the NWL funds cover cropping, rotational grazing, and cultural burns. OWEB has also dropped match requirements from 25% to 5% for Open Solicitation applications. Additionally, the grant applications for NWL funds very closely match the standard Open Solicitation and OAHP applications, with the dual goals of helping existing grantees apply for NWL funds and potential new applicants develop familiarity with OWEB's grantmaking and successfully apply to other OWEB offerings in the future. This funding provides an opportunity for OWEB to expand its partnerships as well as the scope of the conservation activities its grantmaking supports.

IV. Next Steps

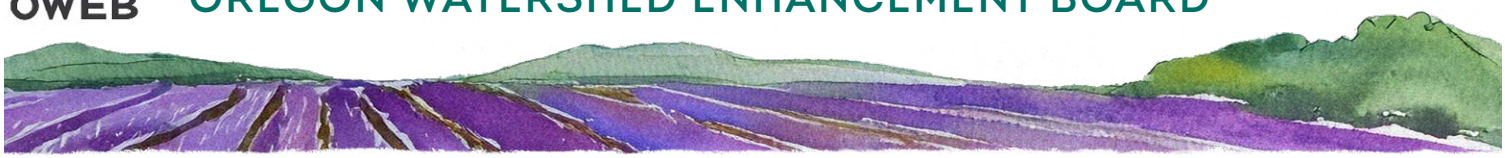
The grant solicitations for NWL funds for both Open Solicitation and OAHP Conservation Management Plans closed on April 1, 2025. As of the writing of this report, staff are in the process of reaching out to potential reviewers for each offering and plan to hold technical review team meetings in early May. For the OAHP offering, an Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission meeting will be held in June so that the commission can review the staff recommendation for the Conservation Management Plan grant applications and make a funding recommendation to the OWEB board. At its July meeting, the board will review and deliberate on funding recommendations for both the OS and OAHP grant offerings supported by NWL funding.

V. Attachments

A. Natural & Working Lands Program Overview
B. Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program Overview

NATURAL & WORKING LANDS PROGRAM

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD



In 2023, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 3409, establishing a Natural and Working Lands (NWL) fund. This fund provides financial incentives and technical support to help Tribes, landowners, land managers, and environmental justice communities implement natural climate solutions, ensuring that communities also benefit from the social, health, resilience, and economic co-benefits of these solutions.

NWL Grant Offerings

RESTORATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Grants that support **planning and implementing** a wide range of natural climate solutions.

OREGON AG HERITAGE PROGRAM (OAHP)
Support for the development of **conservation management plans and per-acre payments** for the implementation of ecosystem services on agricultural land.

NWL Grant Cycle Timeline

- **February 5, 2025** Applications **open**
- **April 1, 2025** Applications **close**
- **July 22-23, 2025** **Funding decisions**

There is $2.25 million available this round. Determination of future grant cycles will be made following the close of the current offering.

Funding & Match

$500,000 max Restoration or Technical Assistance Grants
$200,000 max Conservation Management Plan Grants
5% cash or in-kind match required (non-OWEB)

Definitions

Natural climate solution: An activity that enhances or protects net biological carbon sequestration on natural and working lands, while maintaining or increasing ecosystem resilience and human well-being.

Environmental justice community: Includes communities of color, communities experiencing lower incomes, communities experiencing health inequities, Tribal communities, rural communities, remote communities, coastal communities, communities with limited infrastructure and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes and adversely harmed by environmental and health hazards, including seniors, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Illustrative Program Example

OWEB has previously supported natural climate solutions and equity focused projects with other funding sources. In 2023, OWEB funded a tree planting project in Southern Oregon, where a wildfire burned 37% of the urban canopy, disproportionately affecting low-income residents. The loss of the tree canopy caused increased ground temperatures, increased storm water runoff, and increased nutrient and sediment loads. This replanting and wildfire recovery project is helping restore the urban forest and the ecological services it provides. The NWL funds will build on and expand OWEB's capacity to support programs that integrate climate solutions and human well-being.

Contacts

NWL Restoration and Technical Assistance: **Alexa Schmidt** | Alexa.M.Schmidt@oweb.oregon.gov
Conservation Management Plans: **Taylor Larson** | Taylor.Larson@oweb.oregon.gov

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Eligible Applicants

Like other OWEB grants, an applicant for NWL funding may be any Tribe, watershed council, soil and water conservation district, or not-for-profit institution. Applicants for Restoration and Technical Assistance grants include the above applicants as well as a school, community college, state institution of higher education, independent not for-profit institution of higher education or political subdivision of this state that is not a state agency.

A state agency or federal agency may apply for funding under this section only as a co-applicant with one of the other eligible entities.

Grant Program Evaluation Process

Evaluation of NWL grant applications by technical review teams will be **based on the OWEB evaluation criteria** (Restoration, Technical Assistance, and CMP). Within that evaluation framework, applications will also be prioritized based on the following:

- Inclusion of environmental justice communities and partners in the program project design and implementation.
- Co-benefits of proposed activities for Tribes and environmental justice communities (i.e. clean air, clean water, improved wildfire resilience, job creation, tourism, human well-being, etc.).

NWL Webpage & Additional Resources

For information about grant budgets, getting access to OWEB's Grant Management System, understanding insurance requirements, or using OWEB's online applications, see the video resources here.

Eligible Practices - Restoration and Technical Assistance

Projects with one or more of the following natural climate solutions are **eligible for funding:**

Rangelands

- Prevent conversion of grasslands, shrublands, and savannas to juniper woodlands or invasive annual plant dominated systems
- Restore deep rooted perennial grasses to areas impacted by invasive species
- Restore functioning riparian areas

Forest Lands

- Afforestation/Reforestation
- Improved forest management to reduce wildfire risk, increase overall age of forest, etc. (including prescribed or cultural burns)
- Increase the proportion of harvested wood products used for durable building materials

Urban Lands

- Maintain and expand forest vegetation cover
- Improve fertilizer use in urban and suburban lands to reduce excess nitrogen releases

Blue Carbon

- Tidal wetland conservation and restoration

Eligible Practices - OAHP

Projects on agricultural lands with one or more of the following natural climate solutions are **eligible for Conservation Management Plan funding:**

- Increase riparian buffer beyond edge of field
- Stormwater runoff control
- Improve nutrient management and reduce nitrogen application
- Increase woody plant coverage
- Encourage no-till and reduced-till residue management
- Implement edge-of-field herbaceous (non-woody) conservation practices
- Improve grazing and pasture based management, including rotational grazing
- Cover crops
- Prescribed or cultural burns

OREGON AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) aims to protect and enhance farming and ranching on working land throughout the state while maintaining and enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality, and other natural resources.

OAHP Funds the Purchase of:

Conservation Easements (CE) in order to reduce fragmentation of Oregon's prime working lands,

Conservation Management Plans (CMP) to enhance the natural resources base upon which agricultural operations depend, and

Succession Planning (SP) to assist with the challenges inherent in passing a farm or ranch on to a new operator.

Funding Background

Since 2022 the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board's (OWEB) Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) has **received $10 million** from the State Legislature to fund the purchase of working land conservation easements and conservation management plans. These state funds will leverage an **estimated $9.5 Million in non-state match.**

2023 CE Grants

- **7** applications
- **$5,489,817** requested
- **$3,632,871** awarded
- **5** conservation easements funded
- **5,393** acres of farm and ranch land protected throughout the state

2025 CE Grants

- **10** applications
- **$8,878,709** requested
- **$5,081,036** awarded
- **5** conservation easements funded
- **6,697** acres of farm and ranch land protected throughout the state

OAHP webpage

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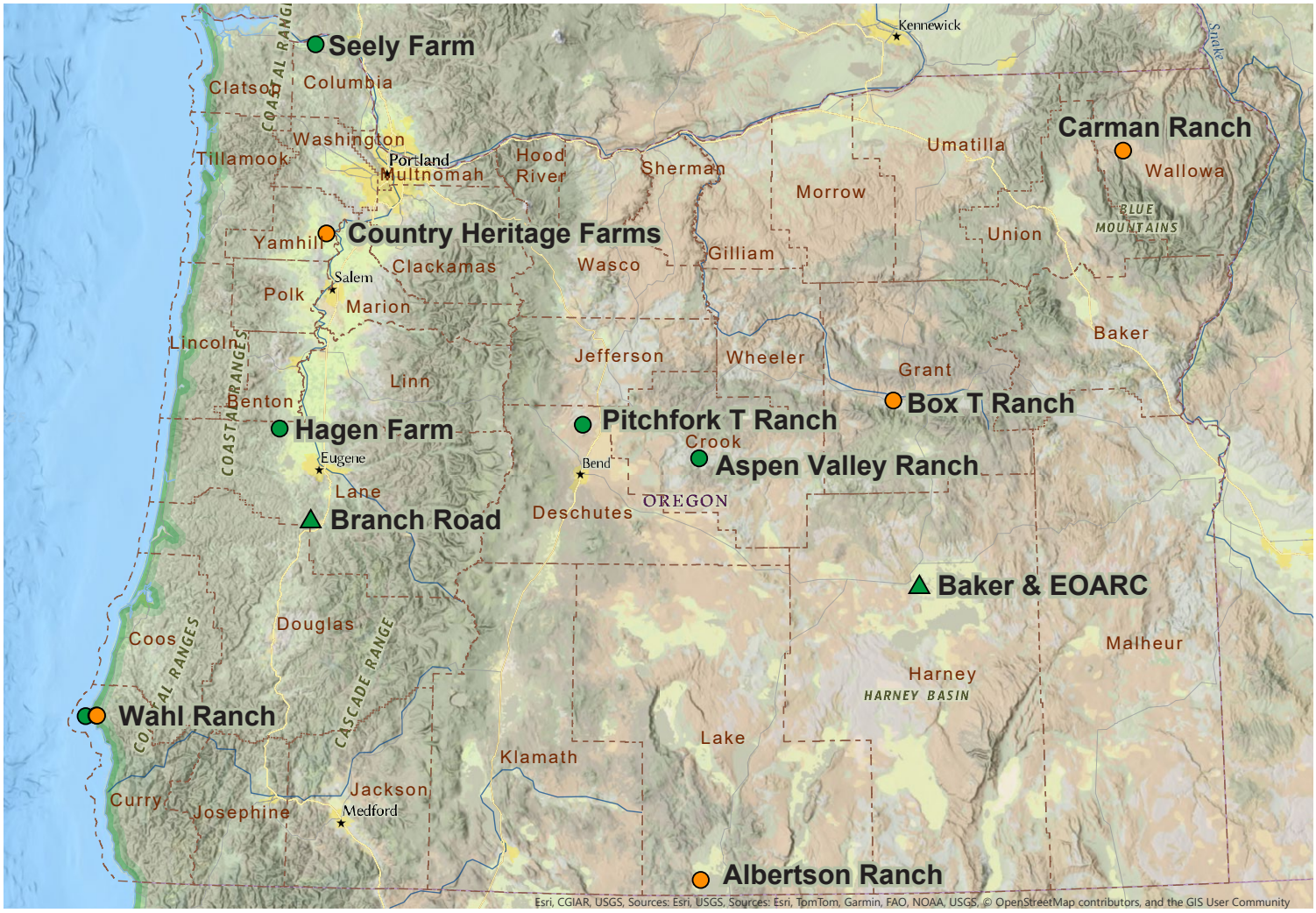
OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD



2025 Conservation Easements
2023 Conservation Easements
2023 Conservation Management Plans
Counties

N
0 10 20 40 60 80
Miles

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OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD
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https://www.Oregon.gov/OWEB/

Year	Conservation Easement Project	Acreage	OWEB Investment	Estimated Match
2023	Aspen Valley Ranch	3,907	$263,779	$414,741
2023	Pitchfork T Ranch	170	$121,135	$258,014
2023	Hagen Farm	156	$269,265	$180,000
2023	Seely Farm	385	$276,297	$216,000
2023	Wahl Ranch I	775	$2,702,395	$4,595,210
2025	Wahl Ranch II	0	$1,736,567	$0
2025	Carman Ranch	1,946	$793,410	$778,599
2025	Country Heritage Farms	304	$1,260,478	$1,215,449
2025	Box T Ranch	3,697	$1,092,008	$1,000,000
2025	Albertson Ranch	750	$198,573	$869,511
	TOTAL	**12,090**	**$8,713,907**	**$9,527,524**

▲ **OWEB also funded** the development of **two conservation management plans in 2023** with the initial investment from the State Legislature and is getting ready **to invest an additional $750,000 through a 2025 solicitation** into supporting the development and implementation of conservation management plans designed to purchase ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, from farmers and ranchers using money allocated to the program through the Natural and Working Lands Fund as directed by the Oregon Climate Action Commission.