

March 19-20, 2008 OWEB Board Meeting Executive Director Update #C5: Deferred Land Acquisitions

Background

This report provides a brief summary of the status of Land Acquisition applications that have previously been deferred for final consideration by the Board. The previously deferred acquisitions total nearly \$1,700,000. None of these applications is ready for Board action in March. The land and water acquisition applications received in October of 2007 are described in Agenda Item F.

Shangrila Creek Wetlands (208-103)

The North Coast Land Conservancy requested \$180,000 (\$240,000 total project cost) to purchase 60 acres along Shangrila Creek in Seaside. This acquisition would add to previous purchases of the Neawanna Wetland Reserve, a planned effort begun by the community in 1992 aimed at protecting the Necanicum Estuary. To date, over 100 acres in the estuary system and tributary streams have been acquired and protected. Staff requested due diligence materials in May of 2007, but they have not yet been received.

Newton Creek Wetlands (207-301)

Mary's Peak Natural Resources Interpretive Center originally requested \$1,500,000 (total project cost of \$2,531,000) to purchase 124 acres of wetland and upland along Newton Creek, in Philomath in October of 2006. The project was recently revised to eliminate some of the partially developed lots on the parcel with a revised request of \$750,000. This application was deferred by the Board at the March 2007, May 2007, and the September 2007 Board meetings. The Board Acquisition Subcommittee has communicated its desire that the applicant should make more progress toward developing the capacity to own and manage the site and develop other funding partners for the project before requesting due diligence materials.

Lostine River (207-324)

The Wallowa Land Trust requested \$516,000 toward purchase of a conservation easement on 175 acres of riparian habitat in Wallowa County. The parcel is located near the confluence of the Lostine and Wallowa rivers. The acquisition is a first step toward future restoration of the riparian and wetland areas on the parcel. This application was received in October 2006 and was deferred by the Board at the March 2007, May 2007 and the September 2007 Board meetings. Due diligence materials were received by staff in October 2007; however the appraisal was not acceptable. The applicant is currently revising the appraisal to address the issues identified in the review.

Pilcher Creek (206-339)

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation submitted an application on October 24, 2005, requesting \$250,000 toward purchase of a conservation easement on a 138-acre parcel on Pilcher Creek in the North Powder River Watershed. The application was first deferred at the March 2006 Board meeting, pending review of due diligence materials. A complete set of due diligence materials has not been submitted.

Staff Contact

If you have questions or need additional information about land acquisition grant applications, please contact Douglass Fitting, at douglass.fitting@state.or.us or 503-986-0046.