



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

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August 28, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Ken Bierly, Deputy Director

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item K-4: CREP Partnership Progress
September 16-17, 2008 OWEB Board Meeting**

I. Introduction

This report provides the Board a brief update of the progress being made on the implementation of the Oregon Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

II. Background

During the discussions of the 2007-2009 biennium capital budget at the September of 2007 meeting in LaGrande, a concern was raised about the increased commitment of funds for CREP contracts. Staff committed to conducting a discussion with stakeholders and developing an approach for budgeting for the next biennium. Additional concerns about funding for CREP Technical Assistance were raised by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and Soil and Water Conservation Commission during discussions about additional funding for soil and water conservation districts.

Staff of OWEB and ODA, in collaboration with staff from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) discussed the issues of the Oregon CREP in front of the Board of Agriculture in May of 2008. The Board of Agriculture adopted a resolution supporting the Oregon CREP as an important element in meeting water quality requirements in agricultural lands. (Attachment A)

III. Current Status

Staff have organized a CREP Work Group and scheduled the first meeting for September 5, 2008. The members of the work group are:

Gail Stinnett, FSA, Hillsboro
Kevin Macintyre, FSA, The Dalles
Lois Loop, FSA, Tualatin
Larry Ojua, ODA, Salem
Tom Straughan, ODA, Pendleton
Amie Loop-Frison, Yamhill SWCD
Ron Graves, Wasco SWCD
Meta Loftsgaarden, NRCS

OWEB staff support will be provided by Ken Bierly and Melissa Leoni. Staff will report on the results of the first meeting at the Board meeting.

IV. Recommendation

This is an informational item. No Board action is requested at this time.

Attachment

- A. Board of Agriculture Resolution

Attachment A

State Department of Agriculture
Salem, Oregon

State Board of Agriculture
May 16, 2008

ACTION ITEM: Position on Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

BACKGROUND: The Oregon Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a cooperative venture between the State of Oregon and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with support from local Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Watershed Councils. The purpose of the program is to restore, maintain and enhance streamside areas along agricultural lands to benefit fish, wildlife, and water quality. Landowners enrolled in CREP receive annual rental payments and financial incentives (cost share) to install conservation measures such as planting trees and shrubs, installing fencing, livestock watering facilities, and other approved conservation measures.

WHEREAS, the State Board of Agriculture recognizes CREP as a potential tool to assist landowner efforts toward achieving state goals for water quality and wildlife habitat,

WHEREAS, CREP provides an opportunity to provide an economic benefit to private landowners who provide ecosystem services that society desires,

WHEREAS, CREP provides a significant economic benefit to the state through the federal commitment to this program,

RESOLUTION NO.:

Resolution: Be it resolved that the Oregon State Board of Agriculture

- 1) Supports the state's involvement in the CREP program
- 2) Endorses the department involvement in CREP as a significant tool to achieve state expectations of agriculture related to state goals for water quality.
- 3) Supports the department coordination with OWEB for continuation of CREP to support the maximum opportunity for landowner enrollment in CREP, to identify priority areas where efforts will be emphasized, and to identify opportunities for partnering with other entities interested in enhancing ecosystem services.

ACTION:

Moved by: Bob Levy

Seconded by: Doug Kraemer

Action taken: Passed by unanimous vote