



Oregon

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Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

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August 28, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Ken Bierly, Deputy Director
Miriam Hulst, Acquisitions Specialist

**SUBJECT: Agenda Item K-5: Coastal Wetlands Grant
September 16-17, 2008 OWEB Board Meeting**

I. Introduction

This staff report updates the Board the status of the 2008 Coastal Wetlands Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to fund a fee simple land acquisition project in the Alsea Estuary.

II. Background

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program was established by Title III of P.L. 101-646, Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act of 1990. Under the Program, the USFWS provides matching grants to states for acquisition, restoration, management, or enhancement of coastal wetlands. The Coastal Wetlands Grants offer a significant partnership investment opportunity to restore and protect wetland and estuary ecological values, promote strong partnerships, and provide up to a three to one match of OWEB funds. To date OWEB has been awarded more than \$6 million in federal funds for the implementation of coastal wetland acquisition and restoration in Oregon.

In June of 2007, OWEB submitted four applications on behalf of our coastal partners for project funding under the Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program. On January 9, 2008, the Secretary of the Interior announced the awards that included all four applications submitted by OWEB. Combined, the four federal grants total approximately \$2.2 million and require a total state match of just over \$1 million.

At the March 2008 Board meeting, the Board awarded \$232,614 to grant application No. 208-1040, Tamara Quays Dike Removal and Fish-Passage Culvert, a project in the lower Salmon River. The Board also authorized OWEB to enter into grant agreements for \$754,800 of federal funding for additional restoration activities in the Lower Salmon River.

At the May 2008 Board meeting, the Board authorized OWEB to enter into grant agreements for the federal funding portion of the Lint Slough Restoration (\$310,000), Yaquina Acquisition (\$95,725), and Alsea Bay Acquisition (\$997,350). The Board also approved the state match for Lint Slough (\$265,000).

III. Alsea Coastal Wetlands Grant (208-116)

The Alsea Acquisition federal grant is \$997,350 with a state match of \$301,000. The Wetlands Conservancy (TWC) has identified a parcel of land that complements their previous acquisitions in the Alsea Estuary. The property is 223 acres and the project will allow the diked marsh area to be restored to intertidal function. TWC and OWEB staff had hoped to request Board approval of the state match at the September meeting. Agenda Item H, Overview, states that staff are recommending funding of up to \$301,000; however TWC has run into significant delays in obtaining the final due diligence materials and has agreed to wait until the January 2009 meeting to request Board approval of the state match.

IV. Staff Recommendation

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