



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

## Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360

Salem, OR 97301-1290

(503) 986-0178

FAX (503) 986-0199

[www.oregon.gov/OWEB](http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB)



### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

**FROM:** Meta Loftsgaarden, Executive Director

**SUBJECT: Agenda Item C: Focused Investment Partnership Priorities  
January 27-28, 2015 OWEB Board Meeting**

#### **I. Introduction**

This staff report updates the Board on Focused Investment Partnership priority submissions and discussions with a variety of experts about identified priority theme areas. Staff will provide summaries of each theme area for Board discussion at the January meeting.

#### **II. Background**

In June of 2013, the OWEB Board approved its Long-Term Investment Strategy Framework with four major areas of investment: Operating Capacity, Open Solicitation, Focused Investments, and Effectiveness Monitoring.

Though OWEB has participated in efforts that align with the qualities of 'focused investments' in the past, there has been no formal definition, process or solicitation approach for the program. In October of 2013, OWEB kicked off a nine-month process to develop a definition, criteria, solicitation approach, program design and process for the Focused Investment category of OWEB funding.

To assist with this effort, the agency has organized a set of external and internal (i.e., OWEB staff) work groups. In selecting the external work group, members were recruited from every region of the state, in addition to representatives from soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs), watershed councils, land trusts, Tribes and other non-profit organizations. The executive boards of the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts, Network of Oregon Watershed Councils and Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts also are represented. Beginning in late 2013, these individuals met together to provide input to the Board on the program's design and implementation.

In addition, between July and October 2014, the Board solicited input from a variety of stakeholders across Oregon to help the Board identify priorities of significance to the state for OWEB consideration. The information received forms the basis for the discussion that will occur at the January 2015 Board meeting.

#### **III. Input Received**

This work continues the Focused Investment Partnership Program plan. Input to this point has included:

- October 2013 – Began design process with work groups

- January 2014 Board Meeting – Board reviewed draft documents and solicited public comment; work group then continued design process
- March 2014 (all six regions) – OWEB staff held listening sessions in all regions of the state to receive input on the first draft of the solicitation process for Focused Investment Partnerships.
- April 29-30, 2014 (Bandon, OR) – OWEB Board received public comment on the draft solicitation process and other aspects of the Focused Investment Partnerships program as outlined above.
- July 29-30, 2014 (The Dalles, OR) – OWEB Board approved definition, criteria, solicitation approach, timeline and priority selection processes.
- July 31-October 15, 2014 – Board solicited input from stakeholders for priority areas
- Mid-October 2014-January 2015 – Staff convened experts in identified priorities to provide initial additional information for the Board’s consideration.

#### **IV. Priority Setting Process**

Following the July 2014 Board meeting, OWEB released the Board-approved questions for consideration as Focused Investment Partnership Priorities are developed (Attachment A). Submissions for this first round of input were due October 15, 2014.

At the January Board meeting, staff will provide additional information, organized in twelve priority theme areas (Attachment B), for Board discussion. The information will be organized in a template for priority themes (Attachment C). In addition, staff will offer an approach for considering priority scales and will bring scale examples to the Board to inform the discussion. Completed priority themes summaries will be made available prior to the Board meeting (Attachment D).

Public comment also will be received at the January meeting both prior to discussion of the theme areas and after the Board has reviewed, providing a chance for groups and individuals to support their suggested priority submissions, suggest new priority concepts, and to provide feedback on Board discussion.

Following the January Board meeting, staff and the Board Subcommittee on Focused Investments will work with technical experts to respond to questions raised at the January Board meeting in preparation for a decision about Focused Investment priorities in April 2015. These steps are based on the process approved by the Board in July of 2014.

#### **V. Recommendation**

This is a discussion item only. No decisions are requested at the January meeting.

#### Attachments

- A. Timeline and Instructions for Submitting Focused Investment Priority Input
- B. Priority Theme areas
- C. Priority Theme template
- D. Priority Theme summaries (*if not available for inclusion in the staff report, will be provided prior to the Board meeting*)

## Input for Board Proposed Priority Consideration

Between August 2014 and April 2015, the OWEB Board will receive input as it develops a set of priorities of statewide ecological significance for Focused Investment Partnership funding. This is a new process for the OWEB Board. These priorities will apply only to the Focused Investment Partnership funding within OWEB's spending plan (currently between 10-12% of OWEB's funds). In an effort to secure early advice and input from a broad cross-section of stakeholders, the Board has developed a set of questions for stakeholder response.

If you are interested in providing input to the Board during this first phase of priority-setting, please respond to the attached questions in a letter. The letter should not exceed ten pages. The Board has identified these questions as a part of their decision-making process. Your feedback will help them better understand priorities from a variety of perspectives.

The steps for priority-setting are as follows:

- 1) August 1-October 15, 2014      OWEB Board receives potential priorities recommendations from stakeholders
- 2) October 28-29, 2014              OWEB Board meeting in Grants Pass - opportunity for stakeholders to provide input on priority proposals and receive additional suggestions during public comment process
- 3) October-December, 2014        OWEB staff and Focused Investment Subcommittee review input; combine similar proposals and develop summary for Board, along with preliminary recommendations
- 4) January 27-28, 2015              OWEB Board Meeting in Astoria – Board reviews subcommittee summary; additional opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on proposals during public comment
- 5) January-March, 2015              Subcommittee and staff solicit additional input as needed through a variety of mechanisms; revise proposals based on feedback from Board and stakeholders
- 6) April 28-29, 2015                Board Meeting in Salem - review final draft priorities; additional opportunity for public comment; Board approves final priorities

If you would like further information about this process or to ask questions, please contact Meta Loftsgaarden at OWEB - [meta.loftsgaarden@state.or.us](mailto:meta.loftsgaarden@state.or.us).

## Proposed Priority Response Questions for OWEB Board

The following questions include factors the Board will consider as they select priorities for the Focused Investment Partnership Program. We recognize all factors are not applicable or known for every priority. Please provide information as available. Summarize the following information about your proposed priority for the OWEB Board to consider (the Board encourages submissions of ten or fewer pages). Your input will be integrated and refined with other input and expertise.

### 1. Proposed Priority Description

- a) What is the native fish or wildlife habitat to be conserved or other natural resource issue to be addressed?
- b) What are the specific expected ecological outcome(s) to be achieved after this priority is addressed?
- c) What is the defined geographic location within which this proposed priority can be successfully addressed?

### 2. Significance to the State

- a) Why is this proposed priority of ecological significance to the state, even though it may not be present everywhere in the state?
- b) Are there any social and/or economic considerations that the Board should understand regarding this proposed priority?
- c) In addition to its significance to the state, identify how the proposed priority fits within regional & local ecological priorities.

### 3. Limiting Factors

- a) What ecological limiting factors exist that relate to the proposed priority identified? *Limiting factors* are the physical, biological, or chemical conditions and associated ecological processes and interactions (e.g., population size, habitat connectivity, water quality, water quantity, etc.) experienced by the habitat that may influence viable population parameters (i.e. abundance, productivity, spatial structure, and diversity).
- b) Reference any framework(s) that exist (Recovery Plans, Implementation plans, etc.).

### 4. Threats and Benefits

- a) What overall threats exist to the proposed priority identified? *Threats* are the human actions (e.g., fishing, development, road building, etc.) or natural (e.g., flood, drought, volcano, tsunami, etc.) events that *cause or contribute-to* limiting factors. Threats may be associated with one or more specific life cycle stages and may occur in the past, present, or future.
- b) What will happen if the threats aren't addressed?
- c) Describe the economic, social, iconic and cultural benefits of addressing the outcome and impacts of not addressing it.
- d) Briefly summarize how much has been done already, how much is remaining.
- e) What is your best estimate of cost to address the priority, and as a result, how economically feasible do you believe it is to address this priority over time?

## 5. Opportunities

## a) Ecological:

1. What are the measures of ecological success? What's the likelihood of ecological success in the short (6-year), medium and long-term (define the term lengths)?
2. What types of voluntary conservation actions could be undertaken to address the proposed priority?
3. Should the proposed priority be divided into geographic areas that are appropriate for partners to address?

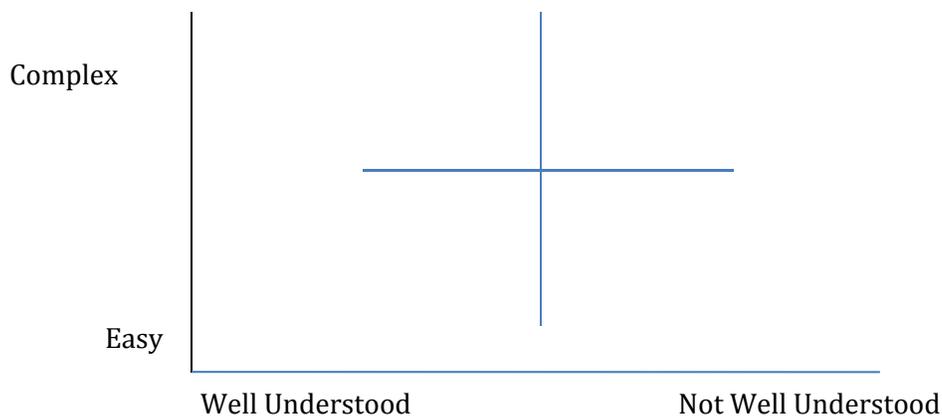
## b) Social:

1. Do partnerships exist to address the proposed priority? If so, briefly describe. If not, note why this proposed priority is important enough that partnerships may form to address it.
2. What social opportunities exist to address the proposed priority? Is there momentum built?
3. Describe educational benefits, if any.
4. Summarize the social, community, political, regulatory or other factors that will help lead to the success of this proposed priority.
5. What can be leveraged to address the proposed priority (funding, acreage impacts, other resources)?

## a) Economic Benefits

1. Describe the economic benefits of addressing the ecological proposed priority, including ecosystem services

6. FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS: Assess the proposed priority by locating the proposed priority in one of the quadrants below. Describe why the proposed priority falls in this quadrant. There is no wrong answer to this question and there may be multiple answers.



7. Is there other information the Board should know regarding this priority?
8. In lieu of attaching letters of support for this proposal, please submit a list of other supporting individuals or organizations.

## 12 “Themes” and the 42 Associated Suggested Ideas for Focused Investment Priorities

*NOTE: Priority submissions were organized into themes OWEB staff for the purpose of efficiently gathering input and advice from technical experts to inform the OWEB Board*

<b>Organizing Theme for Priorities</b>
Suggested Priority Ideas submitted as part of OWEB’s 2014 Priority Input Process (see <a href="http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB/Pages/FIP-Proposed-Priorities.aspx">http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB/Pages/FIP-Proposed-Priorities.aspx</a> for more information)
<b>Closed Basin Wetland/SONEC</b>
Harney Basin wetlands
SONEC basin floodplains
<b>Cross-Theme (these suggested ideas cross over more than one theme)</b>
Assessments of water utilities and irrigation districts
Fish and wildlife habitat connectivity
Fish passage restoration
<b>Deschutes Aquatic Habitat</b>
Conserving a unique spring-fed river system
Lower Deschutes salmon and steelhead stronghold
Salmon and steelhead reintroduction in the Deschutes River Basin
<b>Dryside Forests</b>
Restoration of dry-mixed conifer forests
<b>Grande Ronde Native Fish</b>
Upper Grande Ronde native fish habitat
<b>John Day Native Fish Habitat</b>
Accelerated restoration in the Upper North Fork John Day
Instream habitat and upland plant communities of the John Day Basin
John Day Basin cold water salmonid habitat
John Day Basin restoration of aquatic and upland habitats
Lower John Day River whole watersheds restoration initiative
Restoration of habitats in the John Day River Basin
<b>Lower Columbia Native Fish Habitat</b>
Chum conservation
Hood River salmon, steelhead, and bull trout habitat
Protecting Oregon estuaries from climate change
Sandy River Basin initiative
<b>Oak Woodlands</b>
East Cascades oak woodlands
Oak woodlands in southern Oregon
Willamette Valley oak and prairie habitats
Aquatic ecosystems in Upper Klamath Basin
Governor’s water quality priority: Upper Klamath Basin
<b>Oregon Coast</b>
Governor’s priority: Coastal Coho
Integrated land stewardship for salmon, Cape Blanco area
Oregon Coast Coho
Oregon Coast estuarine habitats
Oregon Coastal Coho habitat, with focus on family, forests, and farms
Reigniting the Oregon Plan: Achieving restoration-scale in coastal sedimentary basins
Rogue Basin native fish population, capacity building
Rogue River stream corridors
Tillamook-Nestucca fish passage partnership
Umpqua and Rogue River basins native fish habitat: Lamprey
Upland/Riparian restoration in the coastal ecoregion
Wild rivers coast estuaries
<b>Sage Steppe/Sage Grouse</b>
Governor’s priority: Sage Steppe
Oregon model to protect sage grouse
<b>Upper Klamath Native Fish Habitat and Water Quality</b>
Aquatic ecosystems in Upper Klamath Basin
Governor’s water quality priority: Upper Klamath Basin
<b>Willamette Basin Aquatic Habitat and Water Quality</b>
McKenzie River conservation of native fish, wildlife and other natural resources
Oregon’s river/Our river: Willamette Basin rivers, streams and riparian forests
Governor’s water quality priority: Willamette Basin

## **Focused Investment Partnerships**

### ***Priority Theme***

At the January 2015 Board meeting, the OWEB Board will discuss themes that have emerged through extensive input in the Priority-setting process to date. This memorandum summarizes one theme for Board discussion.

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### ***Theme name:***

### ***Theme summary based on input received to date***

*This section includes:*

- *A brief description of the geography of the theme,*
- *The native fish and/or wildlife to be conserved or other natural resource issue to be addressed,*
- *The limiting factors relating to the proposed Priority,*
- *The specific expected ecological outcome(s) to be achieved in this theme, and*
- *An overview of the significance of this theme to the state.*

*This information reflects input from the Priority suggestions solicitation process.*

### ***Expert Group input to date***

*This section provides Expert Group discussion highlights, and recognizes that the Expert Group input phase will continue following the January Board meeting as needed to respond to Board questions.*