



Oregon

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Focused Investment Subcommittee

FROM: Eric Williams, Grant Program Manager

**SUBJECT: Focused Investment Partnership: Implementation Applications
January 12-13, 2016 Focused Investment Subcommittee Meeting**



I. Introduction

This staff report and associated attachments provide a summary of the solicitation process and applications received to assist the Board Subcommittee on Focused Investments as they consider the Phase 1 and 2 applications for Implementation Focused Investment Partnerships (FIPs) in preparation for applicant interviews to be conducted at the January 12, 2016 public meeting. Following interviews, the subcommittee will develop a recommendation for the OWEB Board to consider at their January 26-27, 2016 Board meeting for a slate of FIP Implementation awards totaling not more than \$12.75 million.

II. Solicitation Process

In May of 2015, staff solicited both Capacity building and Implementation applications for FIP initiatives (see Attachment A for an outline of the Board approved FIP solicitation process). A July 1, 2015 deadline was established for Phase I Implementation applications. Implementation applicants were required to formally consult with staff prior to submitting an application.

The Phase 1 implementation application addressed the strength of the prospective partnership and required submittal of at least a draft strategic action plan (SAP) consistent with OWEB SAP guidelines.

III. Application Review

By the July 1 deadline, OWEB received 12 Phase 1 implementation applications, the details of which were presented in the staff report for Agenda Item F-1 at the July Board meeting. Phase 1 Implementation applications were reviewed by expert teams organized around the Board-designated priorities for which applications were received. Regional program representatives and FIP staff also reviewed the Phase 1 applications. The Board Subcommittee on Focused Investments met August 4, 2015 and, as outlined in the Board approved process for the FIP solicitation, invited 9 of the 12 applicants to submit Phase 2 applications. The Phase I evaluations are included as Attachment B to this staff report. An invitation to submit was not a requirement to submit a Phase 2 application, but rather an indication of the subcommittee's assessment of the Phase 1 application.

By the November 2, 2015 deadline, OWEB received nine Phase 2 implementation applications, requesting over \$20 million in the current biennium, as shown in Attachment C. As in Phase 1, all Phase 2 applications were evaluated by an expert review team and by OWEB staff, including regional program representatives and FIP staff.

Implementation Application Review Summaries are provided in Attachment D. The Review Summaries include a detailed evaluation of the Phase 2 Application, a summary of the Phase 1 review, and a combined Phase 1/Phase 2 rating. These evaluations were provided to the applicants and will be posted on OWEB's website.

IV. Subcommittee Action

Staff request the Board Subcommittee on Focused Investments consider the Phases 1 and 2 applications and evaluations, along with applicant interviews to be conducted at the January 12, 2016 public meeting, to recommend to the OWEB Board a slate of FIP Implementation awards totaling not more than \$12.75 million.

Attachments

- A. FIP solicitation process
- B. Phase I Implementation Evaluations
- C. List of Phase 2 Implementation applications
- D. Implementation Application Review Summaries

Focused Investment Partnerships: Solicitation Process

Updated April 2015

| CAPACITY-BUILDING FUNDING | IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING |
|--|---|
| May 1-July 1, 2015 | May 1-July 1, 2015 |
| Letters of Intent submission period. Due date: July 1, 2015 | Phase I application submission period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required pre-application consultation with OWEB staff – Must be completed by May 20, 2015 • Required attachment – completed draft of strategic action plan Due date: July 1, 2015 |
| July 1-August 17, 2015 | July 1-August 17, 2015 |
| Staff receives Letters of Intent. Upon receipt, staff will inform applicants of next steps in the process. This stage is not intended to be a pre-screening for applications and will not include any evaluative action. | Staff convenes technical teams designated for each priority area for review of Phase I applications. |
| | Subcommittee takes information from staff and technical teams, and invites select partners to submit Phase II applications materials, including work plan and budget. Other applicants not invited can submit if they choose, though it will be noted there is limited funding available. |
| July 28-29 Board Meeting | July 28-29 Board Meeting |
| Staff updates Board on the Letters of Intent received July 1. | Staff updates Board on Phase I applications received July 1, and provides an update on the status of the review process, including the May pre-application consultations with staff. |
| August 17-November 2, 2015 | August 17-November 2, 2015 |
| Capacity-Building full application submission period. Due date: November 2, 2015 | Application Phase II submission period. Due date: November 2, 2015 |
| November 2, 2015-January 8, 2016 | November 2, 2015-January 8, 2016 |
| RPRs review Capacity-Building applications and provide feedback to capacity review team and subcommittee for their consideration. | RPRs review applications and provide feedback to technical review teams and subcommittee for their consideration. |
| Staff convenes state capacity review team to make recommendations to subcommittee through staff. | Staff convenes technical review teams designated for each priority area to complete a technical review of applications in their area and provide feedback. |
| Subcommittee reviews feedback from RPRs and recommendations from the state capacity review team. Provides final recommendations for funding to Board based on available funds. | Subcommittee receives applications, technical teams and RPRs feedback, and asks any follow-up questions of RPRs and/or technical teams. |
| | Subcommittee interviews all applicants, negotiates budgets, and recommends Implementation grants for funding based on available funds. |
| January 2016 Board Meeting | January 2016 Board Meeting |
| Board reviews subcommittee recommendations and selects Capacity-Building programs for funding. There will be an opportunity for public comment at this time. | Board reviews subcommittee recommendations and selects Implementation programs for funding. There will be an opportunity for public comment at this time. |

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Ashland Forest All-lands Restoration Partnership

FIP Initiative: Ashland Forest All-lands Restoration (AFAR)

Requested Amount: \$12 million over 5 years, 6 months

OWEB Region: 2

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Dry-type Forest Habitat (primary), Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species (secondary), and Oak Woodland (secondary)

Applicant's Summary: The initiative leverages municipal and federal spending to abate the limiting factors of excessive forest density, fuels build-up, and risk of severe fire in an effort to sustain wildlife and wildlife habitat. AFAR models the "all lands" collaborative — a scientific-based approach with an ecosystem services foundation — as a demonstration program to help increase the pace and scale of forest restoration. The initiative proposes to strategically treat 8,500 acres of private forest settings along with ongoing treatment of 7,600 acres of federal land within a 53,000-acre landscape. Core partners include the City of Ashland, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Lomakatsi Restoration Project, and The Nature Conservancy.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: The partnership seeks a rich and resilient dry-type forest landscape of open and complex-closed old-growth habitats in appropriate settings and a community engaged in all-lands management to sustain ecosystem function, biodiversity and the delivery of ecosystem services.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- MOUs and supporting documents establish clear roles and responsibilities and reflect an effective partnership for delivering the current program.
- OWEB funds will leverage an existing NRCS grant for both public and private work.
- Good secured match from City of Ashland (\$350,000/biennium)
- Excellent maps showing ownership, treatments, and wildfire hazards.
- Tables are helpful, showing "minimum" and "optimal" treatment needs.

Initiative

- Initiative is a high social priority.
- Strong example of a public-private partnership that has been under way on public lands for some time.
- The initiative is based on an established template that has worked well for the partnership to date.
- High-functioning partnership with lots of layers; "well-oiled machine."
- The partnership has a proven track record on public lands.
- The USFS is deeply involved in this partnership.
- Good representation from conservation and science-based groups.
- Proposed initiative seems achievable within the proposed initiative duration of five-and-a-half years.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Ecological outcomes should be better articulated, especially a discussion of how treating 8,500 acres will result in achieving outcomes. As written, application appears to have more of a fuels-reduction focus than an ecological focus.
- Application would benefit from a discussion of what a functioning forest should look like within a populated landscape and how ecological outcomes can be achieved while protecting infrastructure.
- Application is weak in outreach details in terms of engaging private landowners and developing agreements. Private land ownerships in this area are typically small in a fragmented landscape, creating challenges for pulling together contiguous parcels. It is unclear if the partners need more time to conduct outreach to private landowners.
- It is unclear in the application if private landowners will be expected to contribute financially or with in-kind support.
- Application appears to request funding only for private lands, but work should span both public and private lands. There may be a need for additional work on public land that is necessary to ensure success on a landscape scale or to identify how that work will be accomplished if it is planned.
- Though work will be mostly hand-work in steep, hard-to-access areas, the cost-per-acre nonetheless seems somewhat high, and the application requests the maximum amount of FIP funding.
- Secondary OWEB priorities that were noted in the application are not adequately discussed in terms of connection to limiting factors and ecological outcomes (e.g., not linked to native fish conservation and recovery plans).
- Application is unclear about whether the initiative involves only non-commercial harvesting.
- The crosswalk between SAP and the Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS) is difficult to follow.
- Core partners are different in the SAP than in application — NRCS is listed as a core partner in the application, but not in SAP/CIS. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed as core partner in SAP/CIS, but not in application.
- SAP/CIS is not clear on yearly targets, just that 8,500 acres will be treated over the life of the initiative.
- Governance is not spelled out in the SAP.

Initiative

- Despite a strong partnership, the main challenge will be the ability to deliver on private lands in a timely and strategic manner.
- The ridge-top focus has great appeal, but ridge tops are not very accessible; a fuel break that is not accessible is not a fuel break.
- The applicant could consider better articulating the connection between the initiative and anticipated climate-change effects and other issues of concern (e.g., water quality for municipal drinking water supplies).

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: Invite a Phase 2 Implementation application.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Coos Watershed Association

FIP Initiative: Millicoma Forks Coastal Coho Restoration Partnership

Requested Amount: \$6,150,000 over 5 years, 4 months **OWEB Region:** 2

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Coho Habitat and Populations Along the Oregon Coast (primary); Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species and Coastal Estuaries in Oregon (secondary)

Applicant's Summary: The Millicoma River provides coho anchor habitat and serves as a stronghold for fish populations during periods of poor ocean survival. The initiative's outcomes will strengthen this effect by restoring two 6th-field watersheds by addressing three coho key limiting factors: 1) impeded fish passage at physical barriers, 2) degraded instream habitat complexity; and 3) degraded water quality. With the exception of Glenn Creek on the East Fork Millicoma (identified as "lower priority"), both Millicoma Forks are identified as "highest priority" for OWEB's *Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species* Focused Investment Priority. The initiative proposes to: 1) fix two significant fish passage barriers, opening 33.3 miles of coho and Chinook habitat; 2) construct 19 instream habitat improvement projects to instigate recovery of 30.5 miles of streams and to move them toward becoming "high-quality" habitat; and 3) stormproof 88.6 miles of forest roads, thereby hydrologically disconnecting road surfaces from live streams. Core partners include Coos Watershed Association, Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, Elliott State Forest, and OSU Extension.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: The initiative's primary objective is to restore natural processes in the East and West fork basins of the Millicoma River to perpetually sustain high-quality coho habitat to meet state and federal recovery goals. The application's stated outcomes include: fish passage will be improved for coho and Chinook; streams will meet DEQ water quality standards for sediment, turbidity, and biocriteria; all road-stream crossings will have the capacity to pass a 100-year storm event; and 85% of surface coverage on the treated roads will be hydrologically disconnected from live streams.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Leverage is substantial.
- The *Supplemental Action Plan for the Millicoma Forks* provides excellent detail about the proposed initiative.

Initiative

- The scale, scope, and pace of the proposed initiative is appropriate and is likely achievable.
- Initiative is linked to major local and regional priorities.
- The proposed initiative has the potential to measurably improve habitat conditions for coho and other fish and wildlife.
- Projects outlined in the application will address key limiting factors for coho, including lack of instream complexity and water quality (sediment).

- The habitat improvements connected with the Millicoma Oxbow Reconnection project will address one of the key limiting factors for coho of lack of instream complexity.
- The Coos Watershed Association (CWA) has been successfully implementing quality restoration projects since 1994. The CWA is a leader in the south Oregon coastal restoration community.
- The CWA is successful at engaging landowners.
- The CWA has designed, funded, and implemented past projects that are very similar to the projects proposed in the Millicoma initiative.
- The partnership has identified specific projects for this initiative through their action planning.
- The partnership has the capacity to begin implementation immediately, which includes completed technical design for the first phase of projects.
- The partners necessary for supporting roles are already at the table and have established a working relationship to help support project identification, design and development, permitting and implementation.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The partnership did not include a crosswalk between the submitted *Coos Watershed Association Model Watershed Program Proposal*, the *Supplemental Action Plan for the Millicoma Forks* and the OWEB SAP template, as required. Without this crosswalk, ecological outcomes and SMART goals and objectives could not be determined.
- The *Supplemental Action Plan for the Millicoma Forks* did not articulate the scientific rationale for project selection.

Initiative

- The partnership was recently created for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the FIP program. Therefore, a determination of whether the partnership is “high performing” cannot be made.
- There is concern that the imminent loss of the CWA’s Executive Director will impact the partnership’s capacity to implement the initiative, regardless of any arrangements made with the new employer.
- While the initiative’s proposed actions were identified as having potential value to coho in the Coos watershed, questions exist as to whether these are high-priority actions for coho recovery more broadly relative to the geographic area of the Board identified FIP priority.
- The fish passage barrier removal element of the initiative’s signature project, the Millicoma Oxbow Reconnection, might be of more benefit to Chinook than coho, and therefore, better analyzed under OWEB’s *Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species* Focused Investment Priority (which evaluates proposed initiatives relative to a broader array of fish species). Fish passage is not a primary limiting factor for coho in the Coos watershed and the fish passage barrier presented at the Oxbow site is not especially high in the ranked categories for statewide fish passage priorities (it is in Group 7).
- Additional information is needed about the current condition of the riparian zone and upland and road impacts, along with information about existing process and function, including the potential for large wood recruitment.
- The proposed road storm-proofing projects are expensive and have a clear economic benefit for the landowner.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: A Phase 2 Implementation application is not invited at this time.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Grande Ronde Restoration Partnership

FIP Initiative: Upper Grande Ronde Initiative

Requested Amount: \$6,922,500 over 5 years

OWEB Region: 5

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

Applicant's Summary: The initiative will develop, implement, and monitor fish habitat restoration projects identified as priorities for spring Chinook salmon and summer steelhead in the Catherine Creek and Upper Grande Ronde Restoration Atlases. Projects will address limiting factors identified for these species for each Biologically Significant Reach (BSR). Limiting factors were identified by members of the Science Technical Advisory Committee (Science TAC) and are virtually the same as those listed in the OWEB Board's Focused Investment Priority for Inland Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species. The Columbia Habitat and Monitoring Program (CHaMP) has 87 monitoring sites in the Grande Ronde Mainstem Focus area. Future CHaMP monitoring will measure the effectiveness of the projects and attainment of project objectives, as well as overall improvements in habitat quality and quantity. Core partners include: Grande Ronde Model Watershed; Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation; Union Soil and Water Conservation District; and U.S. Forest Service La Grande Ranger District.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: 1) improve knowledge of factors affecting survival rate of wild spring Chinook salmon, summer steelhead and bull trout; 2) improve habitat quantity for all life stages of spring Chinook, summer steelhead and other native species (lamprey, freshwater mussels, resident trout, etc.) by protecting and restoring watershed processes and function, cold water refugia, and diverse, complex instream and floodplain habitats; 3) increase habitat quality and diversity (large wood structures, side channels, pools) for all life stages of spring-summer Chinook, summer steelhead and other native species; 4) promote and build trust, relationships, and partnerships with private landowners and public land managers to promote long-term ecologically based conservation ethics.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Partner roles and responsibilities are described in detail in the Atlas and Subbasin Plan attachments.
- Good leverage through the annual Biological Opinion (BiOp) funds from Bonneville Power Administration.
- SMART objectives are clear and detailed.
- Good discussion of climate change effects on habitat restoration goals and resilience.

Initiative

- Addresses limiting factors for ESA-listed spring Chinook salmon and summer steelhead in the barrier-free Catherine Creek and the Upper Grande Ronde.

- Also benefits ESA-listed bull trout, Oregon state sensitive species redband trout, and culturally important lamprey.
- Partnership has prioritized the upper basin based on long-term data and knowledge of the whole watershed, and identified the 11 most critical reaches.
- The core partners have collaborated since 1992, and in that time have implemented more than 400 restoration projects.
- The Grande Ronde Model Watershed provides excellent leadership and has been effective in strategic restoration for more than 20 years.
- Each biologically significant reach was assigned a priority (tiers 1 through 3) based on fish use, habitat condition, and the potential benefit to Chinook, steelhead, and bull trout.
- Effective long-term partnership with long-term monitoring through Columbia Habitat Monitoring Program (CHaMP).
- Most private landowners have already been contacted.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Application does not address the bigger picture issue of the effects of the Snake and Columbia River dams on long-term restoration success in the Upper Grande Ronde. While this issue is beyond the partners' control, it nevertheless, has important bearing on ecological outcomes.
- Leverage is dependent on federal appropriations; however, those appropriations have been secure in the recent past.
- A more effective cross reference between the lengthy 2004 plan and the SAP would have been helpful.
- Evaluating success, adaptive management, and sustainability all need more attention. I

Initiative

- In addition to the CHaMP monitoring protocol, consider implementing PHAMS (physical habitat monitoring strategy – USGS), which would be a good complement to CHaMP. Reach-level fish data would also help to understand migration and mortality. Finally, additional information about pool construction will be important to determining if appropriate actions are proposed in the priority locations.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: Invite a Phase 2 Implementation application.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Harney Basin Wetlands Initiative Partners

FIP Initiative: Harney Basin Wetlands Initiative

Requested Amount: \$5,500,000 over 6 years

OWEB Region: 5

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Oregon Closed Lakes Basin Wetland Habitats

Applicant's Summary: The initiative focuses on the wetlands and wet meadows of Silvies River, Silver Creek, Donner Und Blitzen River and parts of McCoy Creek and includes Harney, Malheur and Mud Lakes. Habitats exist primarily in Lake and Harney counties (including Malheur National Wildlife Refuge), with a small portion in Malheur County. The two primary goals of the initiative are to: 1) improve aquatic health of Malheur Lake wetland habitats for waterfowl and other native fish and wildlife by controlling invasive carp; and 2) conserve 10,300 acres of wet meadow habitat for spring migratory waterfowl. Implementation funding will support capacity needs and restoration activities to improve wetland conditions in Malheur Lake and in associated flood-irrigated wet meadows critical to migratory and resident waterfowl. Core partners include High Desert Partnership, Malheur Nation Wildlife Refuge, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Ducks Unlimited, Intermountain West Joint Venture, Audubon Society of Portland, Harney County Court, local ranchers and others.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: 1) Improved waterfowl use, 2) improved water clarity in treated lakes, 3) increased submerged aquatic vegetation, 4) increased abundance of macroinvertebrates available to waterfowl, 5) improved water quality in Malheur Lake for use by redband trout, 6) reduced carp numbers to a threshold that allows the shallow lakes system to support submerged aquatic vegetation; and 7) increased acreage of voluntary conservation for flood-irrigated wet meadows.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The application identifies high-priority wetland and floodplain habitat for migratory and resident bird and native fish species.
- Strong cover letter demonstrating broad support for the initiative.
- Strong expertise and capacity; the right players are involved (local, state, and federal).
- Impressive list of on-the-ground accomplishments.
- Partners are making headway with outreach to private landowners.
- Common interest in maintaining both critical habitat and working lands.
- The initiative is ambitious, but well-considered and strategic.
- List of leveraged amounts is impressive; solid fund raising track record.
- Large NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant request pending (not yet secured).
- The schedule seems very reasonable for the scope of proposed projects.
- Well-written SAP, easy to follow, used OWEB template, hitting nearly every element.
- Detailed explanation for the need of invasive carp control/wetland restoration with defined targets; good maps

- SMART Goals and Objectives in the SAP are extremely detailed with specific actions leading to ecological outcomes.

Initiative

- This is a key area for migratory waterfowl, especially Malheur Lake.
- Proactive thinking about balancing ecological goals with the needs of private landowners.
- Partners are ready and the group is very diverse. Several different subcommittees are tasked with different objectives and have members with high technical skills and experience.
- The initiative is well-defined with an achievable scale to address water quality, privately-owned wet meadow habitat, working lands, migratory waterfowl habitat, and carp.
- Initiative is linked to major local and regional priorities.
- Goals for wet meadows and control of carp are well discussed; applicant has identified priority locations and best management practices.
- Strong momentum; much work on carp is already under way.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- SMART Goals and Objectives in SAP appear to be missing a section on actions related to flooding/wet meadows/carp exclusion (found in funding needs, but not in SMART G & O section).
- Outcomes related to carp are decades away, though this is more of a reality than a weakness.

Initiative

- Some initial confusion over how many total acres are targeted and what amount of that total is intended for restoration and for acquisition (an accompanying letter at the back of the application cleared up the confusion).
- Some concern about the ability to make meaningful change, given the landscape realities of private-lands flood irrigation and the challenges of adequate annual precipitation.
- Carp control is very difficult, thus a question exists about how will it be managed over time. For example, do commercial ideas for carp (fertilizer) pencil out? Are there other viable commercial ideas under consideration? A solid carp management plan is needed.
- The proposed acquisition of 5,300 acres by conservation easement (working lands) is challenging given the current paucity of qualified third-party interests to hold easements. Some concern about how this will affect the ability to complete restoration and achieve identified ecological outcomes.
- The application would benefit by acknowledging that areas within the geography of the initiative include core areas for sage-grouse and that these wetlands play an important role in brood rearing for the species.
- Better identification and prioritization of wetland fringe areas would be helpful.
- This is a highly manipulated environment; partnership is encouraged to address how they will learn more about where the carp are going before jumping in with restoration.
- Climate change will put more pressure on this area than others. There will always be a footprint of wetlands, even under drought conditions. Knowing where these resilient wetlands are will be critical.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: Invite a Phase 2 Implementation application.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: McKenzie Collaborative

FIP Initiative: McKenzie River Native Fish and Water Quality Initiative

Requested Amount: \$4,525,000 over 6 years

OWEB Region: 3

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

Applicant's Summary: The McKenzie River Native Fish and Water Quality Initiative will support four main goals in five of the seven 5th-field watersheds of the McKenzie River Subbasin: 1) increase instream and floodplain habitat complexity, floodplain connectivity and productivity; 2) improve fish passage; enhance riparian function; and 3) maintain water quality. Key species benefitted include spring Chinook salmon, bull trout, Oregon chub, and Pacific lamprey. Additional benefits are anticipated for Pacific brook lamprey, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, and western pond turtle. Core partners include the McKenzie Watershed Council (MWC), Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB), McKenzie River Trust (MRT), USDA Forest Service, Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District (UWSWCD), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Cascade Pacific Resource Conservation and Development (CPRCD), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Geos Institute and Weyerhaeuser.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: 1) Improved habitat for key aquatic species, 2) maintenance of high-quality drinking water, and 3) enhanced public awareness of and support for watershed conservation and restoration.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Partner roles and strengths are clearly described.
- Application proposes nearly 2:1 leverage of OWEB dollars, with many partners bringing funds to the table.
- The outreach targets seem reasonable.
- Very detailed SMART goals and objectives relating to outcomes in the SAP.

Initiative

- The McKenzie Watershed is important for native-fish conservation and recovery.
- Preliminary monitoring results show that juvenile Chinook from the McKenzie have higher survival rates than any other Willamette tributary.
- Long-term, strong partnership, active since 2000; built around EWEB's Voluntary Incentive Program (VIP).
- Extensive landowner involvement (already reached over 700 landowners), primarily through EWEB's VIP program, on several issues, including riparian habitat, septic system maintenance and replacement, and pesticide use.
- Ambitious goals to reduce pesticides by 40 tons.
- Excellent cost-share programs, including VIP incentive payments for riparian land stewardship and funding for pesticide collection.
- Expanding University of Oregon's SLICES framework to the McKenzie makes sense and will provide a good overall framework for restoration in the lower river.

- While the FIP initiative partnership is fairly new, the partners have a long history of collaboration.
- The McKenzie Collaborative/VIP Partnership has been successful in recruiting landowners implementing riparian restoration.
- Based on prior successful collaboration, the partners appear to have the capacity and readiness to implement restoration.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The proposed initiative area seems ambitious.
- Additional detail is needed about the work proposed for the upper basin and how this complements work in the lower basin.
- The effectiveness of restoration actions under the VIP program may be limited, given that some/many participating landowners do not control enough riparian land to achieve large-scale restoration goals.
- SAP should address partnership and/or discussions with Army Corps in addressing fish passage limiting factors.

Initiative

- Need more rigorous science guiding restoration activities, particularly with respect to natural river processes.
- Would like a more refined approach with respect to upper vs. lower watershed. Although good partnerships exist in the lower river, success in the upper river is less certain due to Army Corps operations. In addition, the lower McKenzie has fewer natural processes due to the influences of upstream dams trapping sediment (e.g., the Leaburg Dam traps a large amount of upriver gravel, yet this does not appear to be factored into proposed restoration actions.)
- Would like justification for the gravel augmentation goal on the South Fork, given that Cougar Dam traps gravel above mile 4.5.
- While the VIP program has reached many landowners to date, questions exist about the scale of restoration outcomes from the program relative to the needs for landowner participation (i.e., see comment above in *Application/SAP Weaknesses* section about the landowner lot sizes).
- Questions exist about warmer temperatures in the lower McKenzie (relative to the upper river) and if the initiative has the ability to address this to some degree.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: Invite a Phase 2 Implementation application.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Oregon All Counties CCAA Steering Committee

FIP Initiative: Oregon Model to Protect Sage Grouse, All Counties

Requested Amount: \$5,900,000 over 5 years

OWEB Regions: 4, 5 and 6

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Sagebrush/Sage-steppe Habitat

Applicant's Summary: Through implementation of the programmatic Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAAs) and associated Site-Specific Plans (SSPs) on private lands in eastern Oregon, the partnership will maintain, rehabilitate, and protect approximately 3.1 million acres of sagebrush rangeland. Major focus areas will be promoting and maintaining current contiguous sage-grouse habitat and avoiding further habitat fragmentation, addressing and ameliorating the threat of juniper encroachment, and developing measures to prevent and control wildfire and the spread of invasive plants. The partnership will use funds to provide technical assistance for the development of SSPs and to assist landowners with the execution of restoration activities to improve sage-grouse habitat and rangeland process and function. Core partners include the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts; Baker, Crook, Grant, Harney, Lake and Malheur SWCDs; Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Stated Ecological Outcomes: Landscape-level conservation of the sagebrush ecosystem and sage-steppe habitat, providing sustainability for multiple wildlife species while specifically addressing threats to the Greater sage grouse.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The proposal covers a large area of eastern Oregon that includes Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs) and identified connectivity corridors between PACs.
- Good discussion of issues related to the conservation need and thoughtful approach toward developing and implementing CCAAs for each county involved.
- Good monitoring section included in SAP with discussion of adaptive management.

Initiative

- An existing model in place in Harney County since 2011 to develop programmatic CCAAs for private rangelands in the county.
- Interest from other counties to do the same in an effort to prevent federal listing of sage grouse. CCAAs for these counties were completed as of March 2015. CCAAs are a powerful tool to prevent further habitat loss.
- Well-established partnership with clear expectations for contributions from each partner entity.
- A collaborative process with oversight from USFWS. CCAAs are significant successes for the partners.
- Many of the right partners are involved in this initiative.

- USFWS and NRCS have track records for implementing beneficial actions for sage-grouse, but not counties.
- Secured NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant (\$5.1 million)
- The initiative is operating at the appropriate scale
- Working with willing landowners only; 30-year enrollment program.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- * The initiative is limited to private land cooperation, which alone cannot achieve lasting, large-scale conservation. More discussion of existing work on federal lands is needed, especially on BLM lands (e.g., how will the two complement each other?)
- * Unclear how funding (all sources) will be distributed across the counties; concern that funding will not be allocated according to areas of greatest need (with the largest threats). Is the partnership pursuing a strategic, targeted approach, and if so, what will the ecological uplift be at the end of the initiative period?
- * A better map is needed (e.g., per the map in the application, Harney County does not appear to be as strategic as Malheur County in its planned actions). The current map is not only difficult to read, it also appears to include areas not associated with PACs or connectivity corridors. An integrated map of both public and private land efforts would be helpful, as well.
- * The proposed work in Harney County needs to align better with the OWEB Board's identified core area. OWEB FIP funding can only be used in PACs or identified connectivity corridors.
- Outcomes seem ambitious (e.g., 90 percent of the threats in over 3 million acres will be removed).
- * A better explanation needs to be provided as to how actions carried out over a relatively small area will result in large ecological outcomes being met.
- * Roles and responsibilities were not discussed in the application, though a "Partner Guide" is mentioned. The absence of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife as a listed core partner is noteworthy.
- The application is unclear how the initiative will adjust for unanticipated issues like drought and fire.
- The proposal does not describe lessons learned by the partnership.
- Unclear whether outreach is occurring, or will occur, with landowners on high-priority lands. How many landowners have already been signed up? Application could do more to explain how the partnership will attempt to engage reluctant landowners.
- * Unclear what "bite" the application is taking from the SAP. The SAP mentions 3.5 million acres, but the application states the initiative will cover over 3.1 million acres. Also, outputs/outcomes differ greatly between the application and SAP.
- While the partnership seems stable and committed, governance is not spelled out in the SAP.

Initiative

- Partners have varying levels of capacity to implement the initiative. How will the capacity to implement the initiative be built across the partnership?
- A high standard of conservation has been attached to federal lands; there is a need to provide some assurance that the same standards will apply to private lands.
- * Question about the strategic nature of the initiative, given the extent to which county boundaries seem to determine the extent of commitment of the partners. A more strategic and consistent effort across county boundaries is needed.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: Invite a Phase 2 implementation application. Subcommittee requests specific items, shown above with an asterisk (*), be addressed in Phase II workplan submission to increase understanding of proposed initiative.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Rogue Basin Partnership

FIP Initiative: Rogue Priority Native Fish Barrier Removal

Requested Amount: \$4,200,000 over 6 years

OWEB Region: 2

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species (primary); Coho Habitat and Populations Along the Oregon Coast (secondary)

Applicant's Summary: The initiative proposes to remove an average of six fish barriers per year that are identified in the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's 2013 Statewide Barrier Prioritization list. The actions identified in the Rogue Priority Native Fish Barrier Removal initiative propose to benefit Chinook, coho, steelhead, and Pacific lamprey by improvements to migratory fish access for spawning and rearing and the correlating improvements to the quality of aquatic areas. The Upper Rogue and Illinois are identified as "highest priority" and the Middle Rogue, Applegate, and Lower Rogue are identified as "secondary priority" for OWEB's *Coho Habitat and Populations along the Oregon Coast Focused Investment Priority*. The Rogue Basin Partnership (RBP) was created to serve as the backbone organization for restoration in the Rogue Basin, to facilitate collective impact and delivery on the Rogue Restoration Action Plan. RBP is made up of over 25 member and partner organizations (including watershed councils and non-governmental organizations that have been responsible for previous mainstem and high-priority dam/barrier removals in the Rogue Basin) and agency personnel serving as technical advisors.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: 1) provide migratory fish access to critical spawning and rearing habitats, 2) make higher quality aquatic areas that are projected to be resilient to climate change more accessible, and 3) increase fish species productivity and survival.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Many of the individual partners involved in the partnership have long and successful track records of project implementation.
- The Rogue Restoration Action Plan is very professional and very well-articulated.

Initiative

- The Rogue is an important watershed for native fish, including coho.
- The size of the partnership is testimony to the interest and commitment.
- Addressing the most critical fish passage barriers throughout the Rogue basin has the potential to greatly relieve the stress of one of the Rogue's key limiting factors for steelhead and coho.
- This work can be considered a first line of defense against climate extremes that may become more prevalent in the years to come.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The RBP was recently created, and as a result, the partnership itself does not have a history of collaborative implementation at the partnership level, nor can it show success working together as a cohesive group of partners.
- The ecological outcomes were not clearly identified.
- There were questions about the single focus on barrier removal. An approach that looks at basin-wide limiting factors and then seeks to implement multiple related actions could be more appropriate for the FIP program. The application did not clearly articulate how the partners assessed a broader collection of limiting factors and then arrived at a single-action approach.
- The application identifies nine partners as “member organizations” and another 21 partners as “active participants”. It is unclear from the proposal which entities will be the core implementers and what specific structure will emerge for project implementation.
- Several agencies (e.g., Bureau of Reclamation, Water Resources Department, Army Corps) that are critical to implementing successful fish passage barrier removal projects did not sign the Letter of Participation and are not identified on the List of Entities Participating in the RBP. ODFW and NOAA are also not listed, yet are considered critical partners in the work proposed by the initiative. It is unclear whether they will participate at a secondary level or if they are not engaged in the partnership discussions.
- It is unclear from the application whether the necessary outreach has been accomplished that is needed in order to successfully implement an ambitious barrier removal program.
- Without more information on landowner willingness, technical design needs, and ability to access match funding, it is hard to discern whether the proposed scale is appropriate.
- The Rogue Restoration Action Plan identifies a number of primary limiting factors in the basin, but the application and the Action Plan fail to make a clear argument for why the barrier removal work is the primary focus of the proposed initiative.
- Leveraged funding appears to be substantial, but sources are not identified.

Initiative

- There are efficiencies that can be gained by “batching” like projects, such as barrier projects, and this may be the case in this proposed initiative. However, given the lack of clarity in the proposal about how the partners decided on a barrier-specific focus, it was difficult to determine the justification for the single-action approach.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: A Phase 2 Implementation is not invited at this time.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Sandy River Basin Partners

FIP Initiative: Sandy River Fish Habitat Restoration

Requested Amount: \$11,450,000 over 6 years

OWEB Region: 3

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

Applicant's Summary: The Partners developed a basin-wide assessment and a restoration strategy, which prioritize sub-watersheds within the Sandy Basin. The documents also provide a hierarchical approach to addressing the watershed's limiting factors through restoration work. Still Creek, Salmon River and the mainstem Sandy River corridor have been prioritized for habitat restoration for native fish. Reconnecting floodplains and side channels; increasing large wood; improving riparian function; increasing backwater pools, pool and pool tailouts; and reducing confinement to address altered watershed processes were prioritized restoration activities. Aquatic habitat restoration in the proposed initiative will implement a significant portion of the strategy and advance the long-term goal of native fish recovery. Core partners include: Bureau of Land Management, East Multnomah SWCD, The Freshwater Trust, Metro, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Portland Water Bureau, Sandy River Basin Watershed Council, and US Forest Service.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: Increased native fish abundance and productivity in the 1) Salmon River Watershed, 2) Zigzag River, 3) Upper Sandy River Watershed, 4) Middle Sandy River Watershed, 5) Lower Sandy River Watershed, and the 6) Bull Run River Watershed. In addition: 7) Increased community stewardship; 8) expanded recreational fishery; and 9) increased local economic opportunities.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Addresses Chinook, coho, and steelhead recovery plans.
- The partnership has a successful long-term track record, highly quantifiable objectives, and a past history of measuring success.
- Partnership has an excellent track record of successfully leveraging grant dollars, implementing restoration projects in priority locations, and measuring results.
- Partners have a good track record implementing successful restoration projects
- Very detailed application, with numbers based on Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment (EDT) model outputs and supporting information regarding scale and priorities.
- Good, measurable, specific targets and interim milestones for proposed restoration priorities.
- Using a hierarchical framework to guide implementation:
 - ~ Tier 1 actions: Reconnect Isolated Habitats
 - ~ Tier 2 actions: Restore Long-Term Processes (water quality, nutrients, channel and floodplain function)
 - ~ Tier 3 actions: Restore Long-Term Processes (riparian vegetation)
 - ~ Tier 4 actions: Restore Short-Term Processes (in-stream habitat)

- Outcomes are clear and specific, with numeric % increase targets for abundance and productivity of Chinook, coho, and steelhead.
- Objectives and actions are also clear and specific with numbers of boulders, pieces of large wood including key pieces, length of channel restored, and area of pool and pool tailout for priority watersheds.
- Detailed plans for baseline and effectiveness monitoring.
- Provided monitoring results showing favorability of log jams for juvenile fish and redd sites.
- SAP appears achievable and sustainable.

Initiative

- This is a mostly free-flowing river that can be a salmon stronghold.
- Uses anchor habitat approach.
- Proposed actions address habitat complexity
- 46 habitat traits analyzed for 136 river reaches and used for gap analysis.
- Scale is appropriate; three sub-watersheds prioritized— Still Creek, Salmon River, and the mainstem Sandy.
- 3 of 4 “H’s” already addressed: Hydropower (significant dam removals), hatcheries (comprehensive Hatchery Genetic Management Plan), and harvest (commercial and recreational harvest regulations), leaving Habitat to be addressed in this initiative.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Application did not adequately reflect the high performing nature of the partnership and is sparse in terms of governance.
- Leadership and partner roles are not clear in the application, creating some concern that the initiative is more a collection of agencies and groups operating in a loose alliance rather than as a high-performing partnership.
- The partnership requests nearly the maximum funding amount (\$11.45M), reflecting the high cost of log installations.
- The partnership’s proposed fiscal process should be explained.
- Some concern about whether the proposed actions/outputs will achieve the desired ecological outcome.
- The City of Portland’s connection with the project seems minimal in terms of leveraging dollars for restoration, especially given the relatively low match proposed in the application.
- The recreational fishery objective is not a SMART objective.

Initiative

- Initiative relies on very specific EDT model outputs; while this is a sophisticated model, ground-truthing of model inputs and outputs would strengthen the approach.
- Consider using percentage increase targets rather than specific numbers for both habitat restoration outputs.
- Need more information on the \$1 million levee project to justify its prioritization relative to the cost.
- More information is needed on landowner acceptance of proposed restoration projects.
- Elaborate on how and why the partnership chose the areas it did to work on.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: Invite a Phase 2 Implementation application.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: The Deschutes Partnership

FIP Initiative: Habitat Restoration for Anadromous Fish Reintroduction in the Deschutes

Requested Amount: \$12 million over 5 years, 5 months

OWEB Region: 4

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

Applicant's Summary: The Deschutes Partnership will restore the physical and biological conditions necessary for successful reintroduction of salmon and steelhead into 226 miles of historic habitat in Whychus Creek, Metolius River, and Crooked River. The Crooked River is identified as "highest priority" and the Metolius River and Whychus Creek are identified as "second highest priority" for OWEB's *Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species* Focused Investment Priority. There are four core implementing partners: Upper Deschutes Watershed Council, Crooked River Watershed Council, Deschutes Land Trust, and the Deschutes River Conservancy.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: Land conservation, stream habitat restoration, stream flow restoration, fish passage, and fish screening to accomplish ecological outcomes centered around restoring the physical and biological conditions necessary for reintroduction of salmon and steelhead in the Upper Deschutes Basin. Other outcomes include outreach, partnership capacity, and effectiveness monitoring.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The applicant provided a useful and realistic table identifying watershed, outcomes, and estimated funding in the application materials.
- The initiative is closely linked to the Mid-Columbia Oregon Steelhead Recovery Plan.
- Limiting factors are well identified and the strategies and actions proposed are generally accurate to address these.
- The outcomes and sub-outcomes articulated in the application are clear and useful for understanding which actions will be addressed.
- Leverage appears to be strong (1:1).
- The partnership's SAP is clearly written and follows the OWEB template.
- The SAP includes an excellent overview of the Focus Area, demonstrating the partnership's understanding of the Upper Deschutes Basin's systems and functions.

Initiative

- The partnership has been working together since 2006 in a collaborative fashion to implement restoration programs focused on reintroduction.
- The partnership has a long and positive track record of developing sound project technical design, implementing restoration programs, and using effective monitoring strategies.
- Core partners have missions that directly align with the reintroduction effort.
- The partnership is adept at breaking down programmatic initiatives into smaller objectives, identifying organizational niches, and implementing projects.
- Leadership within the core partnership has remained relatively consistent, which has allowed the partnership's past work to remain on schedule.

- The partnership has projects queued up and ready for implementation, such as restoration at Whychus Canyon and stream flow restoration with Three Sisters Irrigation District.
- The partnership is able to leverage match funding from a variety of sources: Pelton General Fund, Pelton Water Fund, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.
- The partnership proposes to implement the next five years of prioritized projects throughout the entire Upper Deschutes Basin and from the full portfolio of strategies identified in its SAP. This mirrors how the partnership has been operating throughout the duration of the DSIP.
- The scope, scale, and pace of the initiative are ambitious. However, from past experience, it is clear that the partnership can deliver what they propose.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The SAP and application need more specifics to understand pressing issues in the Deschutes watershed related to fish return data and how this information influences where restoration and conservation work occurs, federal legislation related to flows in the Crooked River, and how the partnership's work is strategized and coordinated with the specific reintroduction efforts occurring in the basin.
- More information is needed to understand whether the partnership can achieve the ecological outcomes in question, including chances of reintroduction success, impacts of federal legislation and other big-picture items.
- More information is needed on how the partnership proposes to enhance and maintain the capacity of the core partners.
- The application states that the partnership's strategic planning process included a "logic framework," employing Miradi software. However, the SAP contained no description of this process. As a result, though the logic framework is an acceptable model, the application itself does not provide a strong link between the conservation need and the outcomes and actions identified in the SMART Goals. A stronger tie needs to be articulated to better understand how actions and projects have been identified and prioritized so that reviewers can determine whether ecological outcomes are realistic.
- The SAP should include a discussion of influences outside of the Upper Deschutes Basin, particularly issues related to Pelton Round Butte Dam.

Initiative

- Secondary partners do not have a formal role in the partnership beyond participation in the technical review, funding, or implementation of individual projects.
- The OWEB Board-identified priority includes the Crooked River in the "highest priority" area. The Crooked River Watershed Council has a sound track record in implementing fish passage and screening projects, but has less demonstrated experience with engaging landowners in complex stream habitat restoration.
- The partnership has experienced some challenges with communication and coordination. However, recent actions by the core partners indicate their commitment to continuing to address these issues in the future.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: Invite a Phase 2 Implementation application

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Upper Klamath Comprehensive Agreement Partnership

FIP Initiative: Upper Klamath Riparian Management Initiative

Requested Amount: \$6,000,000 over 6 years

OWEB Region: 4

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

Applicant's Summary: The goal of the initiative is to address the limiting factors for native fish species in OWEB Board-identified highest priority watersheds within the Upper Klamath Basin – Upper Klamath Lake and Sprague River. Actions the partnership will undertake include rectifying barriers to upstream fish passage, eliminating entrainment risks, improving floodplain connectivity, and restoring successional dynamics within riparian areas through improved grazing management, which are required to implement the Riparian Program of the UKBCA. In particular, the initiative focus is on the endangered Lost River sucker and shortnose sucker. Core partners include: the Joint Management Entity and Landowner Entity created by the Upper Klamath Basin Comprehensive Agreement (UKBCA), Klamath Tribes, Trout Unlimited, Klamath Basin Rangeland Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and Klamath Watershed Partnership. The partners represent the key stakeholders and technical implementers for the UKBCA.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: 1) a 10 percent reduction in the external phosphorus load from tributaries to Upper Klamath Lake; 2) enrolling more than 200 stream miles into Riparian Management Agreements to assure that they meet proper functioning condition criteria; and 3) increasing summer distribution of bull trout and redband trout by 10 stream miles (as assessed by presence/absence surveys). These ecologic outcomes address the key limiting factors for ESA-listed shortnose and Lost River suckers, bull trout, and other native fish.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The application complements the current Upper Klamath Special Investment Partnership.
- The scale is appropriate to address the ecological outcomes.

Initiative

- The Comprehensive Agreement provides the structure for decision-making and dispute resolution; the agreement's framework appears to have the capacity to implement restoration.
- Riparian restoration targets are included in a binding legal agreement, which targets 80% riparian landowner participation in restoring lands to "full expression of successional dynamics of the riparian plant community."
- Riparian Management Agreements will be recorded in property deeds of willing landowners, ensuring riparian protection in perpetuity.
- The focused work of this initiative is complementary to work that already is underway in the basin on changes to water use.

- Temperature reductions may be a likely co-benefit from the riparian and floodplain restoration proposed under this initiative.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Unclear whether the capacity exists to provide on-the-ground assistance to landowners at the necessary scale.
- Question about whether the budget is sufficient to complete the proposed work.
- Need more details to justify \$3.4 million for removal of six barriers.
- * Match is almost totally reliant on federal appropriations.
- Concern among some elected officials about the Klamath SWCD not being included as a core partner.
- * The attached Comprehensive Agreement, while thorough and containing many components critical to success of the partnership (e.g., decision-making, implementation, etc.), did not contain a crosswalk to enable a complete analysis against the SAP template.

Initiative

- * Concerns about the stability of the partnership, given recent key staff turnover in partner organizations, communication challenges, sustainable funding if federal funding does not come through, and the trajectory for achieving the desired ecological outcomes.
- Need more specificity about how the proposed outputs will result in the desired ecological outcomes.
- * There is not enough information to determine whether the 10 percent phosphorous reduction target will result in decreased algal blooms in Upper Klamath Lake, given that only 40% of the phosphorus load is from anthropogenic sources.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: Invite a Phase 2 implementation application. Subcommittee requests specific items, shown above with an asterisk (*), be addressed in Phase II workplan submission to increase understanding of proposed initiative.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Upper North-Fork John Day Partnership

FIP Initiative: Headwaters Habitat Restoration

Requested Amount: \$7,320,000 over 6 years

OWEB Region: 6

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species (primary); Dry-type Forest Habitat (secondary)

Applicant's Summary: The initiative addresses habitat conservation and restoration needs of inland aquatic habitat for native fish species, as aligned with area recovery plans. Working together since 2011, the partnership consists of members who steward the productive and sensitive headwaters of the North Fork John Day River and their impact on juvenile steelhead. Implementation funds will primarily support on-the-ground actions and stabilize/support the capacity of the partner organizations. Core partners include: Bureau of Reclamation, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation, Desolation Creek, LLC, Malheur National Forest, North Fork John Day Watershed Council, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Umatilla National Forest, Wallowa Whitman National Forest.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: 1) increase abundance of juvenile steelhead by 20%; 2) replenish groundwater recharge and restore base flows for improved hydrography; 3) measurably increase public understanding of restoration processes and outcomes; 4) collect and analyze 30% more data from the specified geography, share reports; and 5) support partners in their collective and individual implementation of restoration actions.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The application identified a number of specific, measureable ecological objectives.
- The discussion of specific limiting factors identified in area recovery plans was well written and useful for review and understanding.

Initiative

- The partnership has been meeting informally for approximately four years.
- The scale of the proposed initiative is appropriate for the FIP program.
- The North Fork John Day is an important area for continued restoration and investment.
- Important headway has already been made in education and outreach; this can provide important leverage for future strategic work in the watershed.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The application does not demonstrate that the lead applicant has a strong track record in leading collaborative implementation.

- It is unclear whether the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs is an active participant in the partnership.
- The application references an “informal process” for partnership management; it does not appear that there is an appropriate structure in place to operate effectively at a programmatic level.
- The timeline for implementation appears not to be realistic, given the up-front needs of project identification, landowner engagement, technical design, and permitting.
- Specific match funding sources were not identified in the application and as a result, it is difficult to determine if the initiative is ready for implementation with leveraged funds.
- In light of the over-allocation of water in the system, it was unclear how the initiative’s efforts to improve groundwater recharge and restoration of in-stream water would meet the desired objectives.
- While the initiative’s focus on restoration of wet meadows is significant to the North Fork John Day system, information is lacking in the application on what strategies and actions will be used to accomplish objectives related to wet meadow restoration.
- Application did not address plans for restoration of dry-type forest. It briefly mentions that 13,000 acres of over-dense forest would be thinned, but there is not additional information.
- The SAP and application do not provide sufficient information to see the links and context for the Outcomes, Goals, and Objectives section.
- The primary measurement identified for tracking the success of the initiative is a commitment to achieving a 20% increase in juvenile steelhead; however, this is likely an inappropriate measure of success for a 5- or 6-year initiative.
- A 30% increase in monitoring data is not an ecological outcome.

Initiative

- Unclear how often the partnership is meeting or what its track record is with coordinated implementation at the partnership level.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: A Phase 2 Implementation application is not invited at this time.

FIP Phase I Implementation Application Review Summary

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Partnership Name: Willamette Anchor Habitat Working Group

FIP Initiative: Upper and Middle Willamette Mainstem Anchor Habitats

Requested Amount: \$9,390,000 over 6 years

OWEB Region: 3

Board Priority(ies) Addressed: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

Applicant's Summary: The initiative addresses restoration and conservation priorities for aquatic habitat for native fish species in the upper and middle reaches of the mainstem Willamette River. Work focuses on enhancing seasonally important resources for native fish. The protection and enhancement of cold water resources is the most critical action that can be taken to support native fish during the summer and fall, when flows are lowest and water temperatures are typically highest. In winter and spring, which are peak periods for juvenile fish rearing and high flows, conservation actions that support productive feeding grounds and slow water refuges are the highest priority. Ecological outputs that can best deliver these seasonally important resources include: 1) re-establishing channel complexity and length; 2) re-connecting the river with its floodplain in the historic meander corridor of the Willamette mainstem and the major tributaries; and 3) expanding the geographic extent and improving the health of floodplain forests. Funds will continue supporting these outcomes, which were initiated under the Willamette SIP (funded by Bonneville Power Administration [BPA], Meyer Memorial Trust [MMT] and OWEB). The initiative has 15 core partners: The Nature Conservancy, McKenzie River Trust, Greenbelt Land Trust, Trust for Public Land, the Long Tom, Luckiamute, Calapooia, and Coast Fork Watershed Councils, Benton and Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation Districts, City of Eugene, Willamette Riverkeeper, Friends of Buford Park, and the Oregon Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Parks and Recreation. While not every partner will implement projects, all are committed to the initiative's vision of *conservation of seasonally critical resources for native fish within designated priority anchor habitats*.

Stated Ecological Outcomes: Ecological outcomes include improved habitat complexity, connectivity and water quality in the Willamette Basin to support the recovery of Upper Willamette Chinook, steelhead, Pacific lamprey and Oregon chub. These outcomes directly address limiting factors and target species identified in the OWEB Board's Priority for Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species.

REVIEW SUMMARY

Strengths

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Outcomes are well thought out and focused on "anchor habitats" that are clearly defined and provide a science-based prioritization of where to work in a large and complex watershed.
- Leveraging capacity is high, with funding partners MMT and BPA historically providing around \$1.7 million annually for restoration projects that meet the three primary objectives.
- The SLICES framework is an excellent tool for identifying and prioritizing projects. Additionally, although the tributaries currently are not well-integrated, SLICES provides an effective measure of

progress toward restoration goals along the mainstem. Expansion of SLICES up some of the major tributaries is currently under way.

- Includes specific output measures: 3,600 acres of floodplain forest restored; 3,400 acres of floodplain reconnection; and 100 acres of aquatic invasives treated.
- Evaluation section includes details about Implementation Monitoring, Effectiveness Monitoring, and Status and Trends Monitoring.

Initiative

- This basin has excellent scientific data to inform and measure restoration efforts.
- The three objectives support the outcomes of improved habitat to support the recovery of Upper Willamette Spring Chinook, steelhead, Pacific lamprey, and Oregon chub.
- The core partners have been working together for several years and have demonstrated capacity to implement such an initiative.
- While the partnership has functioned effectively for a number of years, the partnership agreement included in the application is new. The Nature Conservancy leads the new partnership and the proposal outline shows they will provide good leadership.
- The partnership developed a detailed list of projects through a preliminary solicitation that will further advance gains made through prior investments in anchor habitats.
- The focus on anchor habitats makes sense in such a large and complex system; these areas are the most dynamic with reconnection possibilities and geomorphic restoration potential.

Weaknesses

Application/Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- The SAP does not include SMART objectives.
- Budget for restoring 1,500 acres appears high.
- While the SAP briefly discusses the upper tributary watersheds, it limits its focus to below the Army Corps dams. If the upper tributaries are beyond a six-year scope, the SAP should consider including a general strategy for addressing them along with a timeframe.

Initiative

- The limitations of working within such an altered system are real; consider notching and removing levees and dikes to help attain outcomes.
- The partnership will need to engage the Army Corps of Engineers, given their role in dam management.
- The Phase 2 application should consider organizing the timeline with respect to anchor habitats.

Board Subcommittee Recommendation: Invite a Phase 2 Implementation application.

Focused Investment - Phase 2 Implementation Applications and Proposed Budgets

| APPLICANT | ESTIMATED OWEB FUNDING REQUEST | | | TOTAL FIP REQUEST | TOTAL EST. LEVERAGE |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| | BIENNIUM 1 | BIENNIUM 2 | BIENNIUM 3 | | |
| Ashland Forest All-lands Restoration Partnership Ashland Forest All-lands Restoration Board Priority: Dry-Type Forest Habitat | \$1,660,000 | \$2,340,000 | \$2,000,000 | \$6,000,000 | \$7,200,000 |
| Coos Watershed Association Millicoma Forks Coastal Coho Restoration Partnership Board Priority: Coho Habitat Along the OR Coast | \$1,780,000 | \$1,540,000 | \$2,660,000 | \$5,980,000 | \$3,780,000 |
| The Deschutes Partnership Habitat Rest. For Resident and Anadromous Fish Board Priority: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species | \$4,000,000 | \$4,000,000 | \$4,000,000 | \$12,000,000 | \$16,203,000 |
| Harney Basin Westland Initiative Partners Harney Basin Wetland Initiative Board Priority: Closed Lakes Basin Wetlands Habitat | \$1,780,000 | \$1,970,000 | \$2,500,000 | \$6,250,000 | \$10,270,000 |
| McKenzie Collaborative McKenzie River Native Fish & Water Quality Initiative Board Priority: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species | \$1,850,000 | \$2,000,000 | \$2,000,000 | \$5,850,000 | \$8,670,000 |
| Oregon All Counties CCAA Steering Committee Oregon Model to Protect Sage Grouse, All Counties Board Priority: Sagebrush/Sage-Steppe Habitat | \$2,171,000 | \$2,355,250 | \$473,732 | \$4,999,982 | \$2,276,500 |
| Sandy River Basin Partners Sandy River Fish Habitat Restoration Board Priority: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species | \$2,810,000 | \$2,440,000 | \$3,700,000 | \$8,950,000 | \$5,490,000 |
| Upper Grande Ronde Restoration Partnership Upper Grande Ronde Initiative Board Priority: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species | \$1,722,000 | \$2,416,500 | \$2,777,000 | \$6,915,500 | \$44,979,000 |
| Willamette Mainstem Anchor Habitat Working Group Upper and Middle Willamette Mainstem Anchor Habitats Board Priority: Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species | \$2,550,000 | \$2,430,000 | \$2,180,000 | \$7,160,000 | \$7,060,000 |
| TOTAL OWEB ESTIMATED REQUESTS/LEVERAGE | \$20,323,000 | \$21,491,750 | \$22,290,732 | \$64,105,482 | \$105,928,500 |

FIP Implementation Application Review Summary

1. Name of Focused Investment Partnership Initiative:
Millicoma Forks Coastal Coho Restoration Partnership

2. Initiative connection to Board-identified Priority(ies):
Coho Habitat and populations along the Oregon Coast
Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

3. Budget Overview:

| Funding Period | OWEB Funding Request | Estimated Leverage |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Biennium 1 | \$1,780,000 | \$1,870,000 |
| Biennium 2 | \$1,540,000 | \$780,000 |
| Biennium 3 | \$2,660,000 | \$1,130,000 |
| Total | \$5,980,000 | \$3,780,000 |

4. Phase 2 Application Strengths:

- The proposal correctly references applicable plans, including the NOAA Fisheries' Southern Oregon Northern California Coast (SONCC) Coho Recovery Plan.
- The application materials demonstrate that the partnership has a good understanding of the system's limiting factors.
- The prioritization methods used in the Supplemental Action Plan for the Millicoma River Forks are sound; in particular, the prioritization process for instream habitat complexity was well developed.
- The partnership correctly identified Marlow Road as the key problem for addressing sediment in the West Fork Millicoma River. The application and SAP deal well with the sediment issue in the system. The actions presented in the application dealing with roads will begin to address the limiting factor for sediment.
- Implementation of the actions in the proposal would move the Millicoma toward the tipping point in terms of high quality habitat. There is a lot of potential for getting the system closer to high intrinsic potential targets and thus significantly increasing coho.
- The Coos Watershed Association has demonstrated good data collection, monitoring, adaptive management and the ability to implement. The expectation is that this would continue under a FIP Implementation Initiative, including the metrics and monitoring proposed in this application.
- The budget is realistic and targeted almost entirely toward on-the-ground restoration. Substantial leverage will be brought to the initiative.

5. Phase 2 Application Weaknesses:

- Experts felt that the application did not articulate how the proposed actions would address the broken natural processes in the system, and they felt this was particularly true for the limiting factor of instream complexity.
- Engineered log jams in the mainstem of the east and west forks could be valuable for short term gains toward instream complexity as a limiting factor, but questions remain as to the longevity of the log jams. Reviewers question whether the restoration actions being proposed for instream complexity will address the underlying broken natural processes in a manner that would solidify the gains as long term.
- There were questions related to the fish passage component of the proposal which were not as well developed compared to sediment and instream complexity discussions.

- The lead partner, Coos Watershed Association, lacks a permanent Executive Director, raising questions about the stability/capacity of the partnership.

6. Phase 2 Application Issues of Concern (not weaknesses, but issues where additional information or discussion may be needed):

- The forthcoming change in ownership related to some of the Common School Fund lands in the Elliot State Forest leaves uncertainty related to the potentially new or changed impacts to natural processes in the system.
- Concern remains that paving haul roads, such as Marlow Road, will result in increased timber harvest with unknown consequences to the Coos watershed, including increased sediment.
- There continues to be uncertainty as to why the East and West Forks of the Millicoma were prioritized over other portions of the Coos Watershed.

7. Rating of Phase 2 Application: MEDIUM (+)

8. Summary of Phase 1 Evaluation: The proposed initiative is an appropriate scale, scope, and pace for the FIP program. The proposed initiative has the potential to measurably improve habitat for coho and other fish and wildlife, and the partners have a long history of successful implementation. Concerns centered around the recent departure of the Coos Watershed Association's Executive Director, whether the partnership meets the requirements of the FIP program, and outstanding questions related to the projects that will underpin the initiative application. Additionally, because the SAP was a compilation of two separate documents written at different times and for different purposes, there were disconnects in prioritization rationale, particularly related to why the Millicoma Forks were selected over an area lower in the system and whether the initiative was a greater benefit to coho or Chinook.

8. Combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rating: MEDIUM

FIP Implementation Application Review Summary

1. Name of Focused Investment Partnership Initiative:

The Deschutes Partnership

2. Initiative connection to Board-identified Priority(ies):

Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

3. Budget Overview:

| Funding Period | OWEB Funding Request | Estimated Leverage |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Biennium 1 | \$4,000,000 | \$5,750,000 |
| Biennium 2 | \$4,000,000 | \$6,566,000 |
| Biennium 3 | \$4,000,000 | \$3,887,000 |
| Total | \$12,000,000 | \$16,203,000 |

4. Phase 2 Application Strengths:

- The proposed geography is reasonable, the partnership is experienced, and the application is well developed.
- Outcomes align with those proposed in the strategic plan and support the Board priority.
- The core partnership entities are capable of implementing and monitoring. The entities have the requisite expertise to deliver the proposed actions and strategies.
- The partnership has good momentum and the proposal would build on their previous work.
- Reviewers believe that many of the restoration actions presented should have long-term benefits (i.e., permanently conserved instream water and restoration on properties that have permanent protections).
- Passage at Opal Springs, which is included in this proposal, is critical to reintroduction success in the basin.
- Reviewers believe that accomplishment of the actions and strategies in this application can “move the dial” toward the achievement of the desired ecological outcomes.

5. Phase 2 Application Weaknesses:

- Although the application itself was well written, the proposal lacked sufficient detail in the work plan and budget in order for the reviewers to fully consider the proposed activities.
- In the initiative work plan, the outputs and metrics for water conserved instream, measured as cubic feet per second (cfs), do not align with the stated targets listed as proposed actions, nor do they align with the target of 18.9 cfs stated in the application.
- The discussion of streamflow conservation and the associated cfs targets had Whychus Creek and Crooked River watersheds lumped together, making it difficult to ascertain what would be accomplished in each watershed.
- Reviewers questioned why habitat restoration was not identified as an initiative action to be implemented in the Lower Crooked River.
- The baseline conditions discussion (page 10) was not well developed. The limiting factors, baseline and needs were not tied directly to a planning document such that the statements could be verified. Reviewers could not understand what the overall needs are (i.e., streamflow) and how much progress this proposed initiative will make toward achieving those targets.
- Reviewers believe that outreach needs to be targeted to landowners in critical sections of the basin rather than the proposed general community outreach.

- The requested budget of this partnership continues to be the highest of all the proposals. Although it is acknowledged that the partnership's strategies and actions are ambitious and expensive to implement, reviewers noted that the proposed work plan focused exclusively on reintroduction of ESA-listed species, the success of which is dependent upon actions beyond the partnership's control, and lacked details regarding benefits to other native species.

6. Phase 2 Application Issues of Concern (not weaknesses, but issues where additional information or discussion may be needed):

- Reviewers continue to have questions regarding the likelihood of successful reintroduction in relationship to impacts from outside of the initiative's proposed geography, particularly issues related to the operation and management of the Pelton Round Butte Hydroelectric.
- Reviewers continue to have questions related to reintroduction efforts within the proposed geography and how the partnership is adapting its strategies to remain current.
- Monitoring and evaluation metrics need improvement. Reviewers would like to see a discussion in the application of how fish are responding in terms of density and abundance, and reviewers believe these types of metrics should be included in the partnership's monitoring strategies.
- Reviewers would appreciate a more robust discussion of other species that use the system and that could benefit from these proposed actions (i.e., bull trout).

7. Rating of Phase 2 Application: HIGH (-)

8. Summary of Phase 1 Evaluation:

The application was well written, limiting factors are well identified, and the strategies and actions proposed are generally accurate to address those limiting factors. The partnership has a long and positive track record of developing sound project technical design, implementing restoration programs, and using effective monitoring strategies. Primary critiques revolved around the lack of specificity in the application for reviewers to adequately understand the likelihood of achieving significant ecological outcomes that can positively impact reintroduction efforts. These questions include but are not limited to: fish return data and how this information influences where restoration and conservation work occurs; federal legislation related to flows in the Crooked River; issues related to the Pelton Round Butte Hydroelectric Complex; and how the partnership's work is strategized and coordinated with the specific reintroduction efforts occurring in the basin.

9. Combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rating: HIGH (-)

FIP Implementation Application Review Summary

1. **Name of Focused Investment Partnership Initiative:** Harney Basin Wetlands Initiative
2. **Initiative connection to Board-identified Priority(ies):** Oregon Closed Lakes Basin Wetland Habitats
3. **Budget Overview:**

| Funding Period | OWEB Funding Request | Estimated Leverage |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Biennium 1 | \$1,780,000 | \$2,580,000 |
| Biennium 2 | \$1,970,000 | \$2,290,000 |
| Biennium 3 | \$2,500,000 | \$5,400,000 |
| Total | \$6,250,000 | \$10,270,000 |

4. **Phase 2 Application Strengths:**

- The scale of the initiative is appropriate with clear linkages to work on federal land (Malheur National Wildlife Refuge).
- Strong community outreach plan.
- The balance of the budget is well structured with initial focus on technical assistance leading to on-the-ground work as the partners gather information and prioritize work.
- The partners have identified the primary threat in the area (carp) and have clearly identified the actions necessary to control carp in a staged manner.
- The attached carp management plan that was requested with the Phase I evaluation highlights and discusses several actions that the partnership may take to address carp control.
- Good discussion of how adaptive management will be utilized for both carp control and enhancing wet meadow habitats.
- Landowner support for working lands easements appears to be high.
- Work plan is well thought out and clearly covers all elements.
- The partnership is diverse and has been working together for several years.
- The partnership is clearly thinking of the ecological, social, and economic outcomes of their initiative.
- Excellent leverage demonstrated, with innovative sources of funding (e.g., revenue from carp harvest).

5. **Phase 2 Application Weaknesses:**

- The request has increased ~\$750,000 from Phase I to Phase II, yet the acreage identified for wet meadow enhancement has decreased by 3,800 acres.
- A better discussion of why past efforts to control carp (e.g., rotenone treatments) failed would strengthen the application. Particularly lessons learned from these past efforts.
- Securing working lands easements is an important element of the work plan, yet it is not clear who will hold the easements.
- A discussion on accounting for drought in the project area was lacking.
- Installation of piezometers on private land is expensive. Vegetation health would be a preferable surrogate.

6. **Phase 2 Application Issues of Concern (not weaknesses, but issues where additional information or discussion may be needed):**

- There is a concern that high levels of methylmercury exist in the Great Basin, and that this may cause neurological problems with migratory birds (particularly shorebirds). Partners should be aware of this issue, and consider working with USGS to monitor methylmercury and potential impacts to birds in the focus area.
- The incentive for irrigators to transition to sprinkler systems versus updating flood-irrigation infrastructure is a challenge that the partnership faces to maintain surrogate wetlands.
- It will be important for partners to prioritize landowners that are utilizing flood irrigation on flat areas near streams.
- It will be important for the partners to contact the Oregon Water Resources Department Watermaster on all irrigation issues.
- This initiative has particularly strong economic linkages with agriculture and tourism. It would be beneficial for the partners to consider studying the economic value of the work proposed to the local community.

7. Rating of Phase 2 Application: HIGH (-)

8. Summary of Phase 1 Evaluation: Strengths identified in the Phase I evaluation included a strong partnership with impressive on-the-ground accomplishments, demonstrated strategic thinking with the scope of the initiative, an excellent Strategic Action Plan, and clear momentum to continue complex work. Weaknesses identified in the Phase I evaluation included the difficulties associated with effective long-term carp control, the lack of a third-party conservation easement holder in the focus area, and some concern with the ability to make meaningful change given the nature of complex projects and drought associated with climate change. The partnership was invited by the Board Subcommittee to submit a Phase II application.

9. Combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rating: HIGH (-)

FIP Implementation Application Review Summary

1. **Name of Focused Investment Partnership Initiative:** Upper Grande Ronde Initiative
2. **Initiative connection to Board-identified Priority(ies):** Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish
3. **Budget Overview:**

| Funding Period | OWEB Funding Request | Estimated Leverage |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Biennium 1 | \$1,722,000 | \$9,381,000 |
| Biennium 2 | \$2,416,500 | \$17,795,000 |
| Biennium 3 | \$2,777,000 | \$17,803,000 |
| Total | \$6,915,500 | \$44,979,000 |

4. **Phase 2 Application Strengths:**

- Well-developed partnerships, including Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Columbian River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Oregon Dept of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Reclamation, US Forest Service, and Bonneville Power Administration. The Freshwater Trust will assist with acquisitions/water leasing. Partners have been working collaboratively for over 20 years.
- Well-developed priorities that are based on limiting factor analysis and existing recovery plan documents.
- The Atlas document for Catherine Creek and the Upper Grande Ronde is an excellent tool. The Atlas utilizes existing scientific data, current research evidence, and current knowledge of local biologists to create a strategic, collaborative, and prioritized habitat implementation plan. The initiative focuses on Biologically Significant Reaches.
- Highly leveraged initiative.
- Good sustainability strategy: adequately fund maintenance and use conservation easements in key locations.
- Good adaptive management process through monthly partner meetings.
- The MOU clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of each of the core partners as they relate to implementation of the Upper Grande Ronde partnership.
- Implementing CHaMP (Columbia Habitat Monitoring Program) for site-scale monitoring and PHaMS (Physical Habitat Monitoring Strategy) for reach-scale monitoring.

5. **Phase 2 Application Weaknesses:**

- It is difficult to determine the context for this work. What has been accomplished to date and what does the monitoring data show? How has the previous work changed the baseline and what is the new baseline?
- Need to better connect the dots in the monitoring data and monitoring plan.
- It is not clear how many landowners are lined up for project implementation.
- The application mentions that BPA and BOR are unable to supply adequate design resources, yet the budget has very little design funds (\$85,000 in biennium 1).
- Need better linkage between proposed actions and limiting factors.

6. **Phase 2 Application Issues of Concern (not weaknesses, but issues where additional information or discussion may be needed):**

- Outreach plan is vague; budget includes \$60,000 for 0.5 FTE outreach position.
- It is unclear whether constructed alcoves will be self-sustaining.
- Will water efficiency projects result in protected in-stream water rights?

7. Rating of Phase 2 Application: MEDIUM (+)

8. Summary of Phase 1 Evaluation: Strengths identified in the Phase 1 evaluation included clearly defined partner roles and responsibilities, good leverage, clear and detailed objectives, and clearly defined priorities expressed by stream reach with respect to limiting factors. Weaknesses included success evaluation, adaptive management, and sustainability. The Phase 1 evaluation recommended including PHaMS, which the partnership included in the Phase 2 application. The Board Subcommittee invited a Phase 2 implementation application.

9. Combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rating: MEDIUM (+)

FIP Implementation Application Review Summary

1. **Name of Focused Investment Partnership Initiative:**
Sandy River Fish Habitat Restoration (Sandy River Basin Partners)
2. **Initiative connection to Board-identified Priority(ies):**
Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species
3. **Budget Overview:**

| Funding Period | OWEB Funding Request | Estimated Leverage |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Biennium 1 | \$2,810,000 | \$1,770,000 |
| Biennium 2 | \$2,440,000 | \$2,000,000 |
| Biennium 3 | \$3,700,000 | \$1,720,000 |
| Total | \$8,950,000 | \$5,490,000 |

4. **Phase 2 Application Strengths:**
 - A clear stronghold for recovery of ESA-listed fish species.
 - Manageable geography, three priority areas.
 - Builds on prior and ongoing efforts.
 - Strong track record of putting work on the ground.
 - The proposed FIP provides a unique opportunity to finish a plan, identify the strengths/weaknesses of the Ecosystem Diagnostic and Treatment (EDT) approach to inform future strategic planning processes based on models, and provide information to establish realistic expectations for timeframes for restoring watersheds.
 - Proposed restoration and project prioritization are grounded in an accepted scientific tool (EDT).
 - The partners are clearly thinking about how to get at watershed restoration.
 - With the removal of Marmot Dam in 2007, this is now a mostly barrier-free system, potentially allowing for real fish gains.
5. **Phase 2 Application Weaknesses:**
 - EDT is a model whose outputs imply a greater degree of precision than can be reasonably expected of a model and should be applied in conjunction with follow-up monitoring
 - While the application includes robust modeling and analysis, it does not appear to “connect the dots” with respect to improving processes. For example, how do the many proposed in-stream wood placements affect sediment recruitment and habitat restoration in dynamic river segments?
 - Why are the current floodplain channels not currently activated, and how will the proposed actions affect floodplain activation?
 - Restoring year-round flow in side channels seems unrealistic given that side-channel flow is typically seasonal.
 - It is unclear, especially in the mainstem Sandy, what maintenance will be required for the proposed actions.
 - Unclear whether this is in fact a high-performing partnership or a loose consortium of independent players. The application does not provide much insight on how the partnership works together (e.g., governance, leadership, decision-making, etc.). What process is used by the subcommittee that identifies and prioritizes projects? How would it manage adaptively in the event of a budget reduction? In the event of a project setback?
 - The adaptive management discussion should include lessons learned, if any, from failed instream wood structures.

- The monitoring plan should include more robust temperature, fine sediment, fish, and in-stream wood effectiveness monitoring.
- The Outreach discussion should include what has occurred to date, especially in the lower watershed, and what lessons, if any, have been learned.

6. Phase 2 Application Issues of Concern (not weaknesses, but issues where additional information or discussion may be needed):

- Are the proposed actions the highest priority, the ones that will “move the dial” on fish recovery in this watershed? Reviewers expressed the following two concerns:
 - ~ The lower watershed (mainstem Sandy) is much more problematic from an ecological and social perspective than the upper watershed (Salmon and Still creeks), which is mostly intact. The lower watershed requires attention in the social realm of working to prevent further development in the floodplain and illegal water withdrawals.
 - ~ There appears to be a disconnect between the relative good health of the upper watershed and the needs identified by the EDT analysis.
- The application should address how levees and existing side channels affect river process issues. River dynamism has been important historically to fish production in the Sandy, and may preclude the need for instream wood in some locations.
- Effectiveness monitoring needs to be more rigorous. Past monitoring of instream structures has shown a rise in fish use, but this monitoring did not include fish productivity.
- Ultimately, the review determined that while this Sandy Basin has high potential as an important fish-recovery area, the proposed approach and activities appear to focus on addressing the symptoms, rather than the root causes of limiting factors.

7. Rating of Phase 2 Application: MEDIUM

8. Summary of Phase 1 Evaluation: The application outlined reasonable and appropriate measurable ecological outcomes that the partnership will pursue in addressing the Board-approved priority. The strategic action plan was strong. Leveraging capacity is high. On the strength of the Phase 1 application, the partnership was invited to submit a Phase 2 application. Though the partners have a long history of collaborating, the application is light on detail about partnership processes and lessons learned. The leadership element is vague.

8. Combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rating: MEDIUM

FIP Implementation Application Review Summary

1. Name of Focused Investment Partnership Initiative:

McKenzie River Native Fish and Water Quality Initiative (McKenzie Collaborative)

2. Initiative connection to Board-identified Priority(ies):

Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

3. Budget Overview:

| Funding Period | OWEB Funding Request | Estimated Leverage |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Biennium 1 | \$1,850,000 | \$3,550,000 |
| Biennium 2 | \$2,000,000 | \$2,320,000 |
| Biennium 3 | \$2,000,000 | \$2,800,000 |
| Total | \$5,850,000 | \$8,670,000 |

4. Phase 2 Application Strengths:

- The link between limiting factors and proposed work is strong.
- Good use of existing strategies (e.g., Oregon Conservation Strategy).
- Match is excellent.
- Partnership is motivated and diverse.
- Application clearly calls out barriers (e.g., dams, fragmented landownership preventing Voluntary Incentives Program [VIP] from having significant impacts), and describes activities that present opportunities for the partnership.
- The proposal offers an opportunity to test how linking drinking water and habitat restoration as dual benefits could engage landowners/communities more effectively.

5. Phase 2 Application Weaknesses:

- Many partnership elements appear to be pending. The partnership is largely untested in the implementation of large-scale projects.
- Some activities proposed in the application are already under way or are being implemented by others (e.g., hatchery carcass placement).
- No information is provided on transport capacity, current imbalances, or how plans for instream wood will affect gravel augmentation.
- A lot of activities are being proposed, which gives the application a shotgun feel, and detail on these activities and a rationale are generally lacking. For example, are there lasting benefits to loading wood into the good habitat above the dams? How valuable is it to augment gravel below Cougar Dam, only to have it trapped at Leaburg Dam lower in the system?
- More discussion was needed of permanent protections – easements and fee title acquisitions.
- There is no nexus in the application between watershed health and water quantity.
- SLICES is an important tool, but probably not at this scale.
- Outreach plan seems passive overall. Connection of youth-related outreach is vague and unclear how it is a critical element to achieving FIP outcomes.

6. Phase 2 Application Issues of Concern (not weaknesses, but issues where additional information or discussion may be needed):

- Many of the proposed activities, while helpful, are non-sustaining (e.g., loading gravel, instream wood structures, carcass placement), and therefore, offer low confidence that real ecological gains can be had.

- While it is generally a good idea to restore habitat below dams, the goal of restoring 6,000-8,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) below Cougar Dam is probably unrealistic. The goal is highly dependent on actions taken by the Corps of Engineers at the dam, which are unlikely to occur anytime soon.
- The VIP program is innovative, but it is unclear how the applicant arrived at the figure of 600 landowners the partnership expects to recruit. Since the program must rely on willing landowners, it seems quite opportunistic.
- The monitoring discussion does not seem to be well-connected to ecological outcomes (e.g., barrier removals). How does the proposed monitoring connect up to moving toward outcomes over time and space?
- The lower watershed is the area of real need where some fish rearing occurs; it should be the focus of all practitioners in the watershed.
- Reviewers felt that without fish passage, the “dial” cannot be moved far in this watershed. The proposed activities, while helpful, cannot restore vital processes; rather, they can only patch a hole.

7. Rating of Phase 2 Application: MEDIUM

8. Summary of Phase 1 Evaluation: The application outlined reasonable and appropriate measurable ecological outcomes that the partnership will pursue in addressing the Board-approved priority. The partnership has a long history of collaboration and landowner engagement through the VIP. The strategic action plan was strong. Leverage was very strong. On the strength of the Phase 1 application, the partnership was invited to submit a Phase 2 application.

9. Combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rating: MEDIUM

FIP Implementation Application Review Summary

1. **Name of Focused Investment Partnership Initiative:** Oregon Model to Protect Sage Grouse, All Counties
2. **Initiative connection to Board-identified Priority(ies):** Sagebrush/Sage-steppe Habitat
3. **Budget Overview:**

| Funding Period | OWEB Funding Request | Estimated Leverage |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Biennium 1 | \$2,171,000 | \$1,588,500 |
| Biennium 2 | \$2,355,250 | \$460,000 |
| Biennium 3 | \$473,732 | \$228,000 |
| Total | \$5,000,000 | \$2,276,500 |

4. Phase 2 Application Strengths:

- The geographic focus is improved from the Phase 1 application, and aligns with sage-grouse core areas and ongoing planning efforts.
- Work on private land will augment restoration efforts in adjacent federal land and address threats at a landscape scale.
- Good partnerships with relevant agencies and demonstrated landowner support in focus areas.
- The goals, objectives, actions, and deliverables are clearly defined in the initiative. Proposed restoration actions are appropriate for sagebrush/sage-steppe restoration efforts. The goals are ambitious, but believed to be achievable.
- Partners appear to have the organizational capacity to deliver in the narrowed focus areas.
- Diverse set of match funding is almost entirely secured and the partners have a proven track record at obtaining outside sources of funding.

5. Phase 2 Application Weaknesses:

- While the geographic focus is narrowed, the application would benefit from a better explanation as to why these areas were selected by the partnership as opposed to other priority areas in Lake, Harney, and Malheur counties.
- The stated goal of enrolling 40% of privately owned sage-grouse Preliminary Priority Habitat in CCAAs by September 30th, 2017 has unclear ecological benefits, as the rationale for selecting 40% (as opposed to another percentage) was not clearly stated. It is also vague how these private lands will be prioritized.
- An analysis of baseline information is not well described in the application and it is unclear as to who is responsible for monitoring. A lot of monitoring information is available and was not included in the application.
- The description of adaptive management is weak in the application, as no threshold values are identified that would trigger adaptive management. Targets should be clearly defined so that trend monitoring is effective, and there is a way to measure success.
- The level of specificity for the actions should be finer. For example, will the 14,680 acres of juniper removal be spread across the focus areas or concentrated in discrete locations?
- It is unclear the role each partner plays in the initiative, a structural framework of the partnership would strengthen the application. There is also a concern about how the Districts that are not involved in the Phase 2 application, yet still listed in the Strategic Action Plan, will remain a part of the overall partnership.

6. Phase 2 Application Issues of Concern (not weaknesses, but issues where additional information or discussion may be needed):

- Working lands easements are discussed as a tool in the Strategic Action Plan, but there is a question as to what entity would hold conservation easements in this area.
- Will the determination by USFWS that protection for sage-grouse under the ESA is no longer warranted have an adverse effect on landowner enrollments and completing CCAAs?
- Descriptions of what livestock grazing regimes are compatible with sage-grouse, and at what utilization rates, are important issues for the partners to consider.
- Successful restoration in warmer, drier portions of the sagebrush ecosystem is challenging and the initiative should be structured in a way that high-risk habitats are protected, and knowledge gained from restoration in these areas is shared with other practitioners.
- As the scale and scope of treatments in the sagebrush ecosystem increases, will there be sufficient contractor capacity to meet demand?

7. Rating of Phase 2 Application: MEDIUM (+)

8. Summary of Phase 1 Evaluation: Strengths identified in the Phase 1 evaluation included the discussion of conservation needs and the approach towards developing and implementing CCAAs in the partnering counties. The partnership was seen as strong and involving the right entities. The Strategic Action Plan included a good discussion on monitoring, and significant match was secured for the initiative. Weaknesses identified in the Phase 1 evaluation included the lack of coordination with restoration efforts on federal land, the distribution of funding across the focus areas which appeared broad and not entirely strategic, the unclear process for how landowners will be recruited, and not distinguishing roles and responsibilities of the partners. The partnership was invited by the Board Subcommittee to submit a Phase II application. However, the Subcommittee also requested that certain identified weaknesses with the application be addressed in the Phase 2 application.

9. Combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rating: MEDIUM (+)

FIP Implementation Application Review Summary

1. Name of Focused Investment Partnership Initiative:

Upper and Middle Willamette Mainstem Anchor Habitats (Willamette Mainstem Anchor Habitat Working Group)

2. Initiative connection to Board-identified Priority(ies):

Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

3. Budget Overview:

| Funding Period | OWEB Funding Request | Estimated Leverage |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Biennium 1 | \$2,555,000 | \$3,860,000 |
| Biennium 2 | \$2,430,000 | \$2,090,000 |
| Biennium 3 | \$2,180,000 | \$1,110,000 |
| Total | \$7,160,000 | \$7,060,000 |

4. Phase 2 Application Strengths:

- Application was well written.
- Strong organizational capacity and partnership; signed agreements; strong letters of support.
- Focus is on the highest priority anchor habitats determined through a Nature Conservancy multi-partner effort.
- Good momentum. Builds on previous work and tests whether an anchor habitat approach can produce measureable results/impact on such a large river system.
- Outcomes align with those proposed in the strategic plan and support the Board priority.
- Strong linkages with other, existing basin efforts.
- Incorporation of the SLICES framework into project identification, prioritization, and success tracking at the river reach scale is a plus.
- Solid multiple species benefits.
- Though west side tributaries may not be a priority, practitioners have done significant work at confluence sites.
- Independent review of their monitoring plan.
- Monitoring section lays out hypotheses, which helped reviewers “connect the dots.”
- Many areas are already in protected status (e.g., state parks).

5. Phase 2 Application Weaknesses:

- Specific monitoring metrics and outcomes are lacking. There are no baseline metrics, and therefore, a lack of target setting for outputs. Simple metrics, which appear in the action plan, would have strengthened the application discussion.
- Specifics of the work plan deliverables are unclear.
- Fish monitoring is weak; doesn’t appear to be coordinated with ODFW. Doesn’t connect to trends in adult fish monitoring and instead seems to defer to what OSU/UO *might* develop.
- Unclear if working only on protected lands. Are all landowners lined up for the first biennium?
- Outreach is not focused on recruiting new landowners since projects are already in the pipeline. What is the opportunity for new projects that arise to enter the pipeline?

6. Phase 2 Application Issues of Concern (not weaknesses, but issues where additional information or discussion may be needed):

- Considerable work went into identifying the anchor habitats; a FIP investment would help see this work through. Consequently, there is a compelling need to document along the way what worked/did not work and lessons learned.
- Invasive fish species are a growing problem. Not all side-channel restoration is necessarily a good thing as those restored areas can attract invasive, as well as native fish. The partnership would do well to focus such efforts in cold water refuge sites and work to find other such areas.
- The partnership could consider a strategic focus on one anchor habitat, rather than actions spread across multiple anchor habitats.
- The individual practitioners are strong, but the partnership is relatively new and untested. The partnership is encouraged to deepen its working relationships, add new partners as appropriate over time, and put strategic interests above all. Organizational accountability and strong leadership will be key.
- The “right” funding sources are currently at the table and match is strong; however, work on the Willamette is complex and expensive. The basin is rich in resources and the partnership is encouraged to continue cultivating and developing new, significant funding partnerships and other types of partnerships.
- The partnership would benefit from opening a dialogue with private landowners to develop best approaches for a cohesive outreach strategy.

7. Rating of Phase 2 Application: HIGH (-)

8. Summary of Phase 1 Evaluation: The application outlined reasonable and appropriate measurable ecological outcomes that the partnership will pursue in addressing the Board-approved priority. The strategic action plan was strong, but neglected to identify SMART objectives, which the applicant remedied in Phase 2. On the strength of the Phase 1 application, the partnership was invited to submit a Phase 2 application.

9. Combined Phase I and Phase II Rating: HIGH (-)

FIP Implementation Application Review Summary

1. **Name of Focused Investment Partnership Initiative:** Ashland Forest All-lands Restoration
2. **Initiative connection to Board-identified Priority(ies):** Dry-type Forest Habitat
3. **Budget Overview:**

| Funding Period | OWEB Funding Request | Estimated Leverage |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Biennium 1 | \$1,660,000 | \$3,880,000 |
| Biennium 2 | \$2,340,000 | \$1,740,000 |
| Biennium 3 | \$2,000,000 | \$1,580,000 |
| Total | \$6,000,000 | \$7,200,000 |

4. **Phase 2 Application Strengths:**

- The Phase 2 application better describes how ecological outcomes will be met through forest restoration activities.
- Good utilization of existing conservation plans and strategies.
- The discussion of natural range of variability as it relates to fire in this area provides useful context.
- Excellent use of monitoring hypotheses that can be monitored and will lead to adaptive management.
- Tying oak restoration to conifer treatments in the target area is beneficial from an ecological and community outreach perspective.
- 1,000 private acres already enrolled in the initiative is an important first step, and if this level of landowner recruitment is sustained, the partners can easily meet their acreage goals.
- The secured contributions through the City of Ashland utility rate increases dedicated to watershed restoration are critical and demonstrate unusually high community support.
- The leverage from federal partners (e.g., Two Chiefs’ Joint Landscape Initiative and U.S. Forest Service) show the initiative is working on a true “all-lands” approach.
- The work plan and budget contain a good mix of restoration action, project development, monitoring, and capacity building.

5. **Phase 2 Application Weaknesses:**

- Landowner and community outreach deliverables are vague. How many landowners need to be involved to make this initiative effective? Will the initiative target landowners with large acreages, numerous small acreage landowners, or both?
- The number of treatment acres funded through an OWEB FIP is unclear.
- While the applicant has reduced the OWEB request, the cost per acre remains high.
- There appears to be some misalignment between the work plan and the budget. For example GIS modeling and prioritization is listed as an action in the 1st biennium, but does not show up in the budget until the 2nd biennium. In the work plan, GIS modeling and prioritization is not listed as an action in the 2nd biennium.
- There are concerns that all the leverage in the 2nd and 3rd biennia are listed as secure and whether federal partners can commit to that.

6. **Phase 2 Application Issues of Concern (not weaknesses, but issues where additional information or discussion may be needed):**

- The tie in to aquatic health would benefit from further discussion. Specifically how will forest restoration in the target area lead to water quality or habitat improvements?
- Lomakatsi is a strong partner with community support. However, as the lead partner on the majority of actions, they will need additional capacity.
- If native seeding is utilized, the partners should monitor effectiveness as this is a controversial action which may not be needed.
- Treating 28% of the landscape is bordering on the threshold of effectiveness and the applicant did not address whether treatments would occur mainly near roads and trails, and minimize treating ridgetops as was suggested in the Phase I evaluation.
- It is encouraged that the partners monitor benefits to wildlife (e.g., Northern Spotted Owl and Pacific Fisher) in treatment areas.
- When prioritization efforts are underway, the initiative would benefit by prioritizing landowner outreach in a way that allows them to target landowners in high priority areas and not treat opportunistically.
- While the ecological focus is tighter in the Phase II application, concerns remain that symptoms are being treated with forest thinning, and the initiative needs to work toward restoring ecosystem functions, so that this work will not need to be repeated every 20 years.

7. Rating of Phase 2 Application: HIGH (-)

8. Summary of Phase 1 Evaluation: Strengths identified in the Phase 1 evaluation included the high functioning partnership, high degree of community support, innovative match, and reasonable actions within the designated timeframe. Weaknesses identified in the Phase 1 evaluation included how forest treatments would lead to ecological outcomes, outreach details, overall cost per acre of the initiative, and whether the partnership could deliver on private lands in a strategic manner. The partnership was invited by the Board Subcommittee to submit a Phase 2 application.

9. Combined Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rating: HIGH (-)