



# Oregon's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

## 2012 Annual Program Accomplishment Report December 31, 2012

**The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board** is a state agency that provides grants to help Oregonians take care of local streams, rivers, wetlands and natural areas. Community members and landowners use scientific criteria to decide jointly what needs to be done to conserve and improve rivers and natural habitat in the places where they live. OWEB grants are funded from the Oregon Lottery, federal dollars, and salmon license plate revenue. The agency is led by a 17 member citizen board drawn from the public at large, tribes, and federal and state natural resource agency boards and commissions.

### ***Mission***

To help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies.

### ***Contact Us***

[www.oregon.gov/OWEB](http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB)  
775 Summer Street NE  
Suite 360  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
(503) 986-0178

### **The Oregon Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program**

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

### **Enrollment 2012**

Oregon added 99 contracts in the 2012 federal fiscal year to enroll 1,759.5 acres, bringing the cumulative total to over 40,300 acres.

### **Federal and State Contributions**

Along with Oregon's agricultural landowners, the State of Oregon and the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Farm Service Agency have contributed significant resources toward riparian restoration through CREP. For 2012, Oregon's CREP expenditures were \$500,770 while the estimated federal costs of the Oregon CREP contracts were \$2,268,073. Oregon has invested more than \$18.3 million in CREP since 1999.

Photos: a rare lupine is a larval host plant for a rare butterfly. They both thrive on a CREP buffer in Yamhill County.



# Financial Contribution

## State and Local Government and Private Contributions

### Oregon and CREP

Oregon continues to support CREP in a variety of ways. Conservation practices implemented through CREP contracts are cost-shared by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and OWEB provide program implementation and coordination services. State funding is provided to support and fund technical assistance positions at soil and water conservation district offices around the state. The Oregon Departments of Forestry and Water Resources also contribute staff time and expertise to the program.

<b><i>Budget Category</i></b>	Expenses 10/1/11–9/30/12	Expenses 1999 to Date
State Cost Share Payments	\$500,770	\$10,617,058
OWEB Support	\$8,314	\$531,904
Oregon Department of Forestry	\$42,629	\$504,931
Oregon Department of Agriculture	\$3,000	\$213,071
Oregon Water Resources Department	\$6,638	\$39,090
CREP Support Activities/Technical Assistance	\$278,098	\$3,090,941
Watershed Tech Specialists (est.)	\$250,000	\$3,312,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,089,449</b>	<b>\$18,309,495</b>

## Monitoring Effectiveness

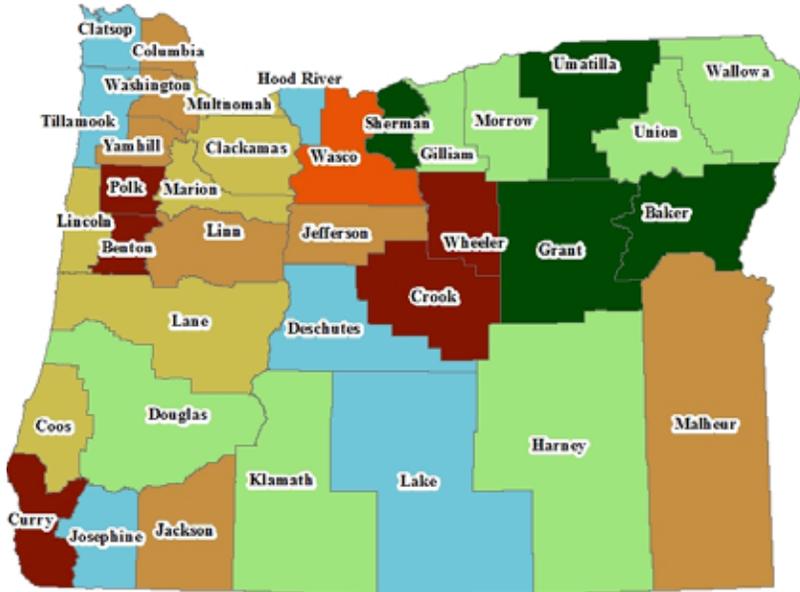
### Working toward developing a monitoring plan

#### Effectiveness Monitoring Program

Across Oregon, the lack of healthy riparian vegetation has been identified as a limiting factor to achieving improved water quality and habitat for native fish species. Prior to establishing the CREP agreement in the late 1990s, Oregon funded a number of riparian vegetation projects to address that limiting factor. In 2009, OWEB conducted an analysis of those projects to determine if investments still exist and were meeting the original riparian cover, stream shade and bank stability objectives; and to evaluate the current riparian vegetation structure. Two key findings from the monitoring of these non-CREP projects will provide a perspective for the agency as it moves forward with CREP effectiveness monitoring. First, accurately defined project locations were, in some cases, deficient in the original project plans and led to poor success rates when attempting to find project locations. Second, continued maintenance of both riparian plant establishment and riparian fencing may need to be evaluated over time to ensure project success.

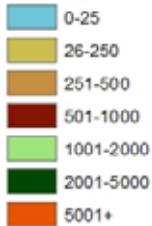
OWEB has identified the need to conduct additional effectiveness monitoring of its riparian restoration investments and is planning to integrate the monitoring of CREP with other riparian evaluation work. OWEB has developed an effectiveness monitoring study plan to provide meaningful information on the status and report on the outcomes of CREP in Oregon. It is anticipated that the study will take place over the next ten years and will also include information on previously completed CREP projects. Potential parameters for this study include stream temperature, stream shading, aquatic macroinvertebrates, fish habitat, and water quality. OWEB hopes to begin a pilot implementation of that study plan in 2013.

# Status of Enrollments



## Legend

### Cumulative Acres Enrolled



<i>Acres Enrolled and Cumulative Water Conserved</i>			
<i>October 2011-September 2012</i>			
County	FFY 2012 Enrollment		Conserved Water CFS
	Contracts	Acres	
Baker	6	326.2	
Benton			.580
Clackamas			.016
Coos			.720
Crook	1/	NA	4.438
Curry	1/	NA	6.050
Douglas	6	60.4	3.046
Gilliam	7	108.2	3.970
Grant	3	144.6	7.288
Klamath	1/	NA	10.688
Harney	1/	NA	
Jefferson	1/	NA	
Lane	5	56.8	.020
Lincoln	1/	NA	
Linn	9	77.6	
Marion	1/	NA	1.270
Morrow	3	54.9	.370
Polk	1/	NA	2.289
Umatilla	4	66.6	3.160
Union	3	75.3	
Wallowa	7	155.9	
Wasco	7	279.1	1.180
Washington	10	48.9	.710
Wheeler	6	39.9	.214
Yamhill	12	48.1	1.604
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1759.5</b>	<b>47.613</b>

Table includes only those counties with new CREP enrollment. Counties without new contracts include: Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Deschutes, Hood River, Jackson, Josephine, Lake, Malheur, Multnomah, Sherman, Tillamook.

# Recommendations

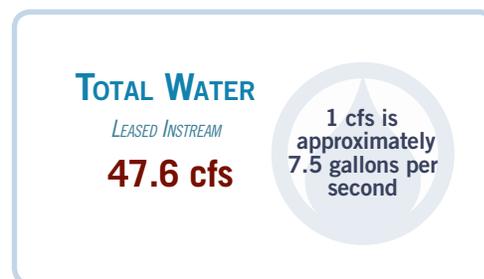


## Technical Assistance Resources

In addition to OWEB and FSA, the CREP partnership in Oregon includes the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Oregon Association of Conservation Districts, and the Oregon Departments of Agriculture and Forestry. This partnership has arranged for extensive CREP training for all technicians, foresters and other employees associated with CREP projects to ensure that the program is implemented effectively at all levels. The training will be held early in 2013 prior to the spring field season, and includes both technical and policy guidance.

## Protection of Instream Water

*One of the unique elements of the Oregon CREP program is the linkage between irrigated land conservation rental and legal protection of water in-stream.* During the program development it was recognized that the availability of irrigation had a significant effect on land values and that there was an opportunity to provide streamflow benefits associated with CREP contracts. In order to receive irrigated land rental rights, the Oregon CREP requires that landowners lease water in-stream for the property enrolled for riparian buffers. This benefits the landowner through higher annual payments and benefits the public through incremental increases in streamflow.



To date, landowners have leased more than 47.6 cfs for instream flow benefits. The majority of the flow benefits have occurred in the John Day and Klamath basins. In both cases the flows protected by the CREP program address significant aquatic resource limitations. The additional flow in the Klamath basin contributes to sucker recovery and assists in the basin scale recovery efforts, while the additional flow in the John Day basin contributes to the recovery of mid-Columbia steelhead. And in the South Coast, additional flow contributes to the recovery of Southern Oregon-Northern California coho salmon.

OWEB will continue implementing the recommendations from the evaluation of instream water right leases associated with CREP in order to achieve additional conservation benefits from the program in Oregon. OWEB, the Oregon Water Resources Department, and other partners will discuss options to allow instream leases to coincide with CREP contract terms.

## Cultural Resources

The conduct of cultural resource reviews continues to slow implementation of a number of CREP projects. OWEB and the Oregon CREP partners will continue to explore options for funding cultural resource reviews to increase the efficiency with which CREP projects are implemented in the state over the next year.