

Appendix G

Malheur River Basin Report

1. Basin Description

The Malheur River is a tributary of the Snake River located in Eastern Oregon along the border with Idaho. The Malheur River Basin is approximately 4,700 square miles and the main channel of the river is approximately 190 miles long. The Malheur River Basin is divided into four subbasins: Upper Malheur, Lower Malheur, Willow Creek and Bully Creek.

A majority of the land in the Malheur River Basin is public, managed mainly by the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and the State of Oregon. Rangeland is the dominant use in the basin along with some forested lands in the northwest portion of the basin, and irrigated agricultural land concentrated in the lower valleys to the east near Idaho. The climate is semi-arid, and agriculture is very dependent on the use of water stored in reservoirs that are filled by streams draining the southern Blue Mountains. Efforts to improve water quality in the basin have mainly focused on improving irrigation efficiency and minimizing irrigation-induced erosion, along with improvements to riparian vegetation condition.

Table G-1: 2011 Land use and land cover for each subbasin in the Malheur.

Subbasin	Watershed Area (km2)	% Urban/Roads	% Forest	% Cultivated	% Range/Forest Disturbance	%Other
Bully	1517.622	0.7	1.0	3.0	93.5	1.7
Lower Malheur	2456.621	1.5	0.3	8.8	88.9	0.5
Middle Snake-Payette	415.216	9.2	0.1	59.5	30.7	0.6
Upper Malheur	6289.276	0.2	18.8	0.6	79.0	1.4
Willow	1967.545	1.5	3.3	7.6	87.2	0.4

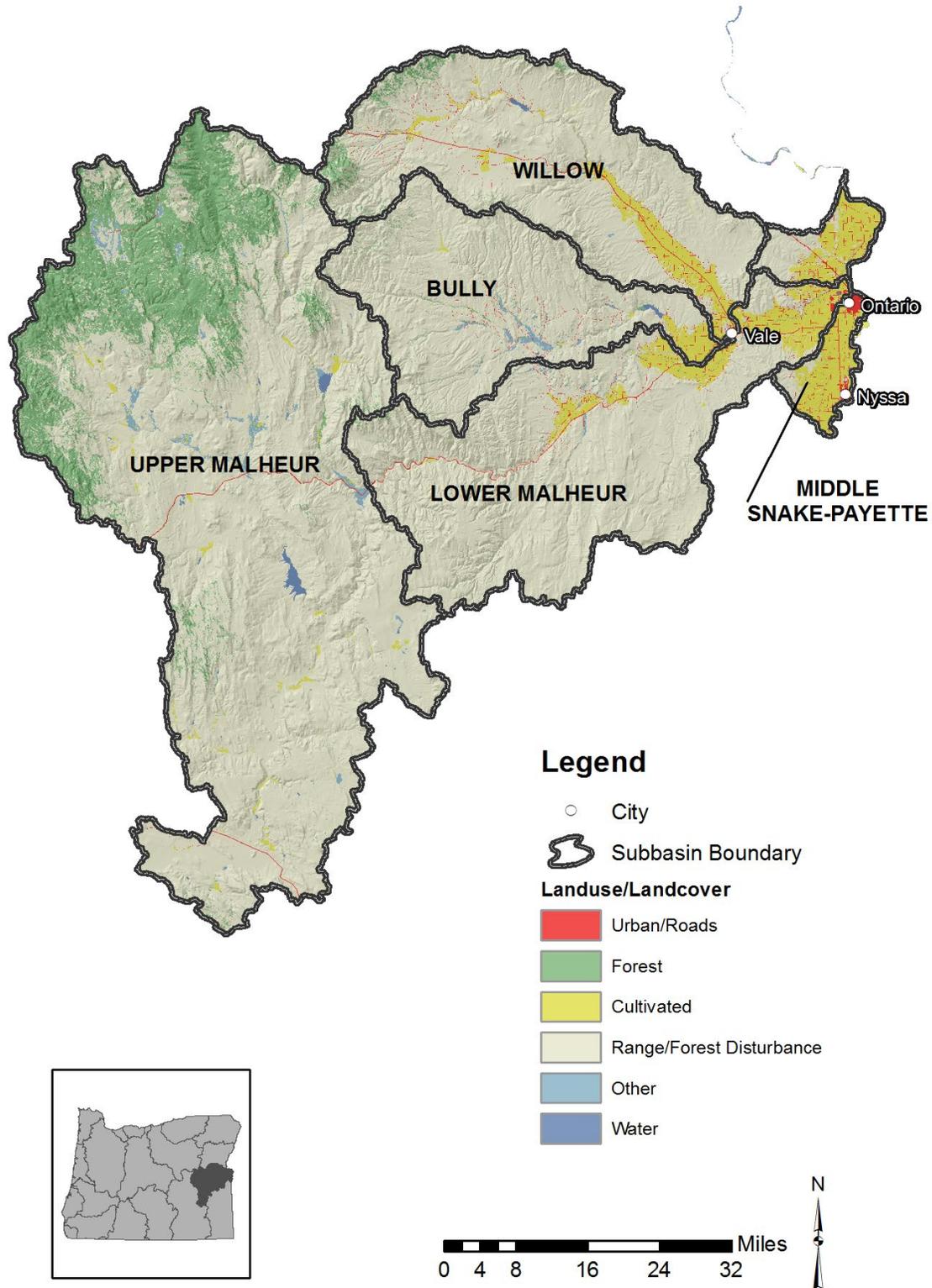


Figure G-1: Land use in the Malheur administrative basin.

1.1 Basin Contacts

Table G-2: Oregon DEQ basin contact.

Administrative Area	DEQ Basin Coordinator
Malheur River Basin	John Dadoly: 541-278-4616: dadoly.john@deq.state.or.us

2. Water Quality Impairments and TMDLs

2.1 Water Quality Impaired Stream Segments

Under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, states, territories and authorized tribes must submit lists of impaired waters. Impaired waters are those that do not attain water quality standards or support all designated uses. The law requires that states establish priority rankings for waters on the lists and develop Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for these waters. Table G-3 identifies the number of Malheur Basin waterbody segments impaired by parameter from the 2012 Integrated Report and the number of segments with approved TMDLs. Sources: [ODEQ](#), [USEPA](#)

Table G-3: Number of impaired stream segments with and without a TMDL as identified in Oregon's 2012 Integrated Report and Assessment database.

Parameter	Segments without a TMDL	Segments with a TMDL
4,4'-DDD	0	1
4,4'-DDE	0	1
4,4'-DDT	1	1
Arsenic	7	0
Biological Criteria	7	0
Chlorophyll a	1	4
Dieldrin	1	1
Dissolved Oxygen	7	1
E. Coli	0	5
Fecal Coliform	0	7
Fish tissue, Mercury	1	0
Iron	9	0
Lead	3	0
Mercury	1	0
Phosphorus	0	1
Sedimentation	0	1
Temperature	0	43
Total Phosphorus	4	0

2.2 Total Maximum Daily Load Watershed Plans

The federal Clean Water Act requires that water pollutant reduction plans, called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), be developed for water bodies that are listed in Category 5 of the Integrated Report (303(d) List). TMDLs describe the maximum amount of pollutants that can enter the river or stream and still meet water quality standards.

TMDLs take into account the pollution from major sources including discharges from industry and sewage treatment facilities, runoff from farms, forests and urban areas, and natural sources. TMDLs include a margin of safety to account for uncertainty, and may include a reserve capacity that allows for future discharges to a river or stream. DEQ typically develops TMDLs on a watershed, subbasin, or basin level and occasionally at the reach level depending on the type and extent of impairments.

The Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) is the framework for TMDL implementation that is issued by Oregon along with the TMDL (Oregon Administrative Rules 340-042-0040(1)). The TMDL and WQMP serve as a multi-sector plan and provides the blueprint for TMDL related implementation activities. Table G-4 lists the TMDLs that have been approved in the Malheur Basin.

Table G-4: Approved TMDLs in the Malheur Basin and the impairments addressed by those TMDLs.

TMDL Document Name	Impairments Addressed
Malheur River Basin TMDL and WQMP	Bacteria (water contact recreation), Chlorophyll a, Dissolved Oxygen, pH, Temperature

3. Implementation Highlights

3.1 Section 319 Grants

Federal Section 319(h) funds are provided annually through the EPA to states for the development and implementation of each state’s Nonpoint Source Management Program. In Oregon a portion of 319 grant funding is “passed through” to support community or partner projects that address Oregon’s nonpoint source program priorities. Generally, DEQ requires grantees to report annually on the progress made implementing their grant project. This section highlights those outputs and accomplishments reported to DEQ in 2019. Note this section does not identify or include projects proposed and awarded a grant in 2019. Outputs and accomplishments for those projects will be reported to DEQ in future years once they have been implemented. For a listing of projects proposed and awarded a grant in 2019 see Section 3.6.2 of the main report.

In 2019, there was one 319 project active that reported project outputs and accomplishments to DEQ. Combined the projects have a total grant budget of \$26,452. Table G-5 describes the project and the reported outputs.

Table G-5: Project outputs reported in 2019 for Section 319 pass through grants.

Project Name	Grantee	Project Description	Reported Outputs
Getting the word out and making things happen in the Malheur River Basin - Phase II	Malheur Watershed Council	The Recipient will design and implement an outreach and education program that will increase public awareness of water quality issues and their solutions; and facilitate systems-wide, on-the-ground projects and changes in land management that result in long term, sustainable, and measureable improvements to water quality in the Malheur Basin. The Recipient will provide technical support to assist with grant writing, project development and management, and monitoring to the agricultural community within the Malheur Basin. The Recipient will also recruit technical experts from the fields of animal science, range management, weed science and riparian vegetation to discuss and help select management techniques that protect and improve riparian area vegetation while protecting economic viability with land managers.	This project completed in June 2019. Malheur Watershed Council has hosted a set of community meetings and events in 2019, including North Fork Malheur Landowner town hall meeting, two “Grants 101” outreach meetings featured a discussion of water quality and TMDL goals and objectives, guest speaker presentation at Council Meeting regarding Malheur River Riparian and Channel issues, and one-on-one meetings/landowner contacts and recruitment.

3.2 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan program provides below market rate loans to public agencies for the planning, design and construction of various projects that prevent or mitigate water pollution. Eligible agencies include federally recognized Indian tribal governments, cities, counties, sanitary districts, soil and water conservation districts, irrigation districts, various special districts and intergovernmental entities. DEQ partners with Oregon communities to implement projects that attain and maintain water quality standards, and are necessary to protect beneficial uses. This section highlights the ongoing projects and the outputs and accomplishments reported to DEQ in 2019.

In 2019 there were no nonpoint source related Clean Water State Revolving Fund projects with reported outputs in the Malheur.

3.3 Source Water Protection Grants

The Oregon Health Authority regulates drinking water under state law and the Safe Drinking Water Act and works cooperatively with DEQ on source water protection efforts. Using the Drinking Water

Revolving Loan Fund, OHA funds Source Water Protection Grants (up to \$30,000 per public water system) for source water protection activities, monitoring, and planning in Drinking Water Source Areas. In addition, loans are available for improving drinking water treatment, source water protection activities, or land acquisition in source areas. Oregon’s Infrastructure Finance Authority is responsible for administering these projects. The loan fund set-asides also fund five Drinking Water Protection positions at DEQ that provide technical assistance to public water systems and communities while they develop and implement strategies that reduce the risk within the delineated source water areas. This section highlights the ongoing projects and the outputs and accomplishments reported to DEQ in 2019.

In 2019 there were no nonpoint source related Drinking Water Source Protection program projects with reported outputs in the Malheur.

3.4 Drinking Water Provider Partnership Grants

Oregon DEQ participates in the Drinking Water Providers Partnership (DWPP) with USDA Forest Service Region 6, EPA Region 10, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management OR/WA Office, the Washington Department of Health, Geos Institute and WildEarth Guardians. Together, these partners coordinate a competitive grant solicitation and award program for environmental conservation and restoration projects in municipal watersheds across the Northwest. The Drinking Water Providers Partnership made the first of the annual awards in 2016 and most projects have a focus on nonpoint sources of pollution. The goal of the Partnership and the funding is to develop and support local partnerships to restore and protect the health of watersheds which communities depend upon for drinking water while also benefiting aquatic and riparian ecosystems, including the native fish that inhabit them. This section highlights the ongoing projects and the outputs and accomplishments reported to the DWPP in 2019.

In 2019 there were no active Drinking Water Providers Partnership projects with reported outputs in the Malheur.

3.5 OWEB Grant Funded Projects

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) is a state agency that provides grants to help Oregonians take care of local streams, rivers, wetlands, and natural areas. These grant projects often address nonpoint sources of pollution and are thus included in this report.

Based on the most recent data available in OWEB’s Oregon Watershed Restoration Inventory (OWRI) database, there were 11 OWEB funded projects completed in 2018 with a total cash and in-kind budget of \$1,648,413. The tables below summarize reported outputs for different project activities in each Malheur subbasin.

Learn more about OWEB grant programs at <https://www.oregon.gov/OWEB/grants/Pages/grant-programs.aspx>.

Table G-6: Summary of OWEB grant funded instream projects completed in 2018, the most recent year data is available in the OWEB OWRI database.

Subbasin	Stream bank stabilized (Miles)	Engineered structures installed (Number of treatments)
Upper Malheur	0.2	26

Table G-7: Summary of OWEB grant funded upland projects completed in 2018, the most recent year data is available in the OWEB OWRI database.

Subbasin	Irrigation system improvement (Acre)	Irrigation system improvement (Feet)
Middle Snake-Payette	114	NA
Upper Malheur	166	3520
Willow	290	NA

Table G-8: Summary of OWEB grant funded upland projects completed in 2018, the most recent year data is available in the OWEB OWRI database.

Subbasin	Off-channel livestock or wildlife watering (Number of treatments)
Willow	2

Table G-9: Summary of OWEB grant funded upland projects completed in 2018, the most recent year data is available in the OWEB OWRI database.

Subbasin	Upland invasive plant control (Area treated)	Upland vegetation management (Area treated)
Bully	NA	1850
Upper Malheur	185	1342

3.6 TMDL Implementation Highlights

TMDL implementation actions taken by Designated Management Agencies (DMAs) or third parties are described in the table below. Most of these actions were summarized from annual reports submitted by DMAs to DEQ in calendar year 2019.

Table G-10: TMDL implementation activities reported in 2019 by Designated Management Agencies or third parties.

TMDL	DMA	Reported Actions
Malheur River	ODFW	Began TMDL implementation planning
Malheur River/Snake River HC	Owyhee Irrigation District	Malheur SWCD, Owyhee Irrigation District and NRCS have been working to modernize and pipe the irrigation system in Fletcher Gulch Priority Area as well as other nearby areas. This work facilitates the conversion of irrigation systems from flood to sprinkler and eliminates irrigation induced erosion. Water quality monitoring has documented significant reductions of sediment and nutrient loading to the Old Owyhee Ditch which eventually drains to the Malheur River, a tributary of the Snake River. See the project details in the main document Section 4.4 and more information about this project at https://nrsc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=b7f126c6b7d146eb8958817b69037219 .