

Oregon Source Water Protection Workshops 2022

Protecting Your Drinking Water Source for Communities and Fish: How to Increase Resiliency with Land Conservation and Acquisition

Discussion and Breakout Sessions

11/3/22 South Coast Workshop – North Bend, North Bend Community Center

Discussion: Challenges and Barriers to Land Conservation

Summary of small table discussions regarding potential challenges and other barriers to land conservation identified by communities.

Barriers:

- Lack of Capacity at public water system, in community, and for partners
 - Financial capacity
 - Barriers to understanding legal stipulations
 - Time and capacity
 - Understanding the process – it's a long process
 - Complicated real estate transactions
 - Limited resources and potential avenues to solve ownership complications
 - Administrative capacity (bottleneck in applying for funds)
 - Lack of city capacity
 - Forecasting, projection and planning of priorities
 - Scale/size determines strategic approach
 - Limited capacity for financial support and public projects from users
 - Lack of capacity
 - Lack of planning/implementing

- Needs for Education and outreach to community and city/community leadership
 - Communications and lack of understanding
 - Negative public perception, loss of control, user conflict
 - Community management
 - Lack of trust
 - Definition of conservation
 - Public Acceptance
 - Turnover in leaders, agencies, and owners
 - Differing opinions of council members
 - Negative perception
 - Lack of info/awareness
 - Lack of understanding
 - Lack of networking

- Difference in interests
- Drama

- Property and Land Costs
 - Disparity between market value and perception vs. appraisal
 - Rising market values
 - Property and land costs
 - Land development pressure in watershed

- Lack of water system jurisdiction over management of watershed
 - Landowners
 - No recourse for contamination
 - Confined by small land holdings
 - Perceived value/cost of property in watershed
 - Rule change for setbacks. Slow and able to take advantage of
 - Getting private landowners on same page
 - Lack of willing sellers/donors
 - Lack of protective land use/role

- Funding Needs
 - Funding and match requirements
 - Resources
 - Lack of feasible funding
 - Applying funding programs with needs and requirements
 - Lack of funding/finding funding
 - Complexity of public funding sources

- Partnerships are a challenge and opportunity
 - Involving the right partners for quality
 - Finding good partners

- Drinking Water Plant operations – high needs for grey infrastructure limits capacity for green/natural infrastructure projects
 - Competing gray infrastructure projects

- 1) Where is Your Community in the Process of Drinking Water Protection?**
- 2) What types of partners or funding sources could support you and your watershed?**

Overall, water systems and their communities are in different phases and have different needs for partners and funding sources. Some are just starting to consider the options, others are developing a plan, and others are working towards implementing protection strategies and others are purchasing land and developing management plans. Highlights from the group discussion include the following:

- Updating SCDA system (infrastructure) (Powers)
- Looking for grants for sensors to evaluate potential water source contamination and addressing wildfire impacts from 2020 (Oakland)
- Meeting with private landowner (former) to address logging plans/water rights. (Garden Valley) Lack of communication
- Have Source Water Protection Plan
- Talking to timber neighbors
- Talking to land trusts
- Investigating situation
- Thinking about regional groups
- Looking for grant writing help buying land
- Planning for forests, roads etc.
- Ready to close on purchase
- Just starting
- Have plan/vision
- Learning about stewardship for the system/community – making sure new landowner (city/water system) can sustainably manage forested land they acquire
- Partners can help with
 - coordination and communication
 - managing land and stewardship
 - Identifying Funding sources
 - Assessment phase
 - Technical assistance

1. What's one thing you've heard today that you will use going forward?

- Consider using the Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) intern program for capacity support (<https://rare.uoregon.edu/>)
- Start developing partnerships and making contacts
- DLCD land acquisition funding may be a good funding source
- Help is there, tap into it!
- Help is available
- Communicate early and often
- Forest assessment contact
- Consider wastewater side
- Learned different levels of needs
- Communities and partners are able to help each other
- Leveraging funding and collaboration is key

2. What are your biggest challenges and what can partners do to help?

- Link conservation with quality
- Take a Holistic/whole system approach to funding – Green + Grey Infrastructure
- Burden to understand many funding sources is placed on applicants. Recommend agencies develop “Master Application” with one stop process and one reporting process.
- How to use available funding resources for different projects. Would like a flowchart on how funders fit together
- Need a vision and a plan

3. What do you want to follow up on? What are your next steps?

- Get a RARE Intern
- Check out DLCD funding
- Build Capacity (hire someone that can service a wider region)
- Ask about CWSRF Sponsorship option
- Look into EPA Technical Assistance funding
- Explore the concept of land purchase
- Figure out carbon credits
- Make connections
- Develop forest management plan (identify grant and partners)
- Work with Port Orford on applications
- Take back information and discuss
- Make plans
- Move forward with wastewater side
- Find a place to fit in and follow up
- Develop Community plan for conservation (where, tools, funding)