

Forest Collaborative 2025
Technical Review Team Rankings
November 21, 2025

Application #	Applicant	OWEB Amount Requested	TRT Recommendation
226-8008-24805	SOFRC	\$76,709	Fund
226-8008-24806	Wheeler SWCD	\$20,000	Do not Fund
226-8008-24807	Wasco SWCD	\$62,190	Fund
226-8008-24808	Discover Your Northwest DBA: Discover Your Forest	64,521	Do not Fund

Forest Collaborative Fall 2025

Southwest Oregon (Region 2)

Application Name: 224-8008-24805

Project Type: Forest Collaborative

Project Name: Rogue Forests in Transition: Building Collaborative Solutions

Applicant: Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative (SOFRC)

Region: Southwest Oregon

County: Jackson

OWEB Request: \$76,709

Total Cost: \$80,545

Application Description Location: The project is located in the Rogue Basin of SW Oregon.

Project Need:

Collaborative Governance: There is a need to update and expand the collaborative governance documents of the Rogue Forest Partners convened by Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative. Originating in 2019, the partnership has discovered a need to improve decision-making specifics, define partnership projects and expand the partnership.

Zones of Agreement: There is a need to find agreement in the effort to treat forested areas on Federally managed lands affected by Douglas-fir mortality and to expand the use of decision support technology such as Vibrant Planet.

Proposed Work:

For collaborative governance partners will meet to update and ratify the current charter, develop an Associate Partners Declaration of Cooperation and form new committees.

For Zones of Agreement RFP will complete an analysis of the DF mortality and convene a facilitated working group with partners who can contribute collectively to solving this crisis.

Project Partners:

Collaboration: The Rogue Forest Partners include 4 nonprofits, 2 state organizations and 4 federal organizations. The organization will be expanded to include Associate Partners who will be involved in projects, serve on committees participate in monitoring and attend field trips. These include watershed councils, other collaboratives, special districts, local governments and industry partners with a focus on organizations currently implementing restoration.

Zones of Agreement: For the Douglas-fir mortality working group, there will be emphasis on organizations who can bring resources to the table and those who may have disagreements with the activities. These include counties, utilities, land management agencies, Oregon Department of Forestry, industry groups and conservationists. The Rogue River Siskiyou National Forest will be the partner for the Vibrant Planet zones of agreement.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application details the collaborative governance and identifies problems the collaborative wants to address and how they want to address them.

- The project scope is articulated and aligns with the expressed goals in the application.
- The budget aligns with the scope of proposed work.
- The application addresses how climate change is associated with Douglas Fir mortality and clearly explains different elements of climate impacts in the region.
- The applicant is addressing complex issues related to economic well-being of community and forest health issues.
- The applicant is proposing to work with the decision support tool Vibrant Planet to help expand the ability of the collaborative to reach broader audiences, overcome barriers, and reach more agreement.
- The collaborative is working in the Rogue Basin where forest restoration is critical, and the collaborative is serving an important role in helping drive restoration efforts.
- The proposed project can build on the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program work already underway in the basin.
- The application provides a good argument on the need to revisit governance documents in order to get an agreement in place to address area forest health issues.

Concerns

- The collaborative faces challenges with getting industry and certain environmental groups engaged and is an invite only partnership.
- The work described in the application appears to align with collaborative governance rather than Zones of Agreement (ZOA).
- The application lacks detail on areas of disagreement, does not thoroughly describe the partner roles and responsibilities, how the partnership is balanced amongst different interest groups, and how the partnership will overcome disagreement amongst partners.
- The application discusses onboarding new associate partners but does not specifically name who these partners may be or details the proposed outreach efforts.
- The application is not clear on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) support for utilizing the Vibrant Planet tool.
- The process for implementing salvage and removal of dying trees, and the associated communications plan, is not well described in the application.

- The application lacks detail about the economic outcomes of the proposed work.
- The applicant did not provide examples of the Rogue Forest Partners engaging in the federal forest planning process.
- Building consensus around BLM Oregon and California Railroad Revested Lands is challenging and time consuming, and the collaborative may need to be refocused on USFS lands where consensus building is a possibility.

Concluding Analysis

The applicant is working in an area that faces multi-faceted economic, political and ecological issues and are doing a worthy job with the tools and partners in place to work in a community with very different interest groups. There is demonstrated need, and the applicant is committed to continuing to face these challenges and wants to implement a new tool that has the potential to increase cooperation among community partners. There are concerns on the lack of details around certain objectives and how the applicant plans to overcome engagement challenges but overall felt that the continuation of this work is needed to address imminent forest health issues. The review team encourages the applicant to reorient their partnership towards an agreement seeking collaborative and draw in more community partners to have a broader effect.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund with Conditions

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

\$76,709

Review Team Conditions

Before first payment, the applicant must provide more detail on who the associate partners are and explain their plan to increase the diversity of voices at table to demonstrate that they're reaching out to groups that traditionally disagree with one another to work towards to an agreement.

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

Staff Recommendation

Fund with Conditions

Staff Recommended Amount

\$76,709

Staff Conditions

To address some concerns outlined above, the grant agreement will require the following special condition under Exhibit B.

Before first payment, the applicant must provide more detail on who the associate partners are and

explain their plan to increase the diversity of voices at table to demonstrate that they're reaching out to groups that traditionally disagree with one another to work towards to an agreement.

Forest Collaborative Fall 2025

Mid Columbia (Region 6)

Application Name: 224-8008-24806

Project Type: Forest Collaborative

Project Name: Ochoco Forest Health Collaborative

Applicant: Wheeler SWCD

Region: Mid Columbia

County: Wheeler

OWEB Request: \$20,000

Total Cost: \$31,561

Application Description 1) This collaborative works within the Ochoco National Forest where it intersects with the service areas of Wheeler SWCD, Mid John Day WC, and South Fork John Day WC. The project area falls in the southeast portion of Wheeler County, southwest portion of Grant County, and northeast portion of Crook County. 2) Within this large geography, there are multiple stakeholders that are working within the same watersheds; however all agencies are working independently of each other even though all have the common goal of achieving landscape resiliency. This leads to the need for a collaborative partnership to work together to ensure projects are effectively expanded upon one another. Discussions have begun with the Paulina Ranger District and other partners regarding future projects. 3) This project will establish a Forest Collaborative group that currently consists of five partners to plan restoration projects within the Ochoco NF. This application will provide capacity for non-federal stakeholders within the collaborative for correspondence, collaborative meetings, and planning efforts to secure restoration projects. The Paulina Ranger District currently has preliminary commercial and non-commercial thinning plans that are a top priority, resulting in USFS personnel being called back from furlough in October 2025 to ensure this project proceeds as scheduled. Wheeler SWCD is requesting funds to build a Forest Collaborative, which will establish the structure and guidelines of operation for the collaborative, plan partnership meetings, and contribute to the ecological restoration of the North Slope Vegetation Management Project and future projects in the Ochoco NF. 4) Project partners include Wheeler SWCD, SFJDWC, MJDWC, Paulina Ranger District, and OWEB.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application accurately reflects current conditions and the opportunities and challenges in area.
- This area has a real need for a forest collaborative, especially with the timeliness of upcoming National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) projects, so collaboration is critically important.
- The application identifies a project focus, the North Slope Vegetation Management project.
- The application notes that the partners are interested in other parties participating in the collaborative.

- The applicant has a good track record of effectively implementing restoration projects and typically functions with limited funding.
- The applicant is trusted in the community, where there are not a lot of partners in the geography and have been active in assisting landowners with wildfire recovery.

Concerns

- The application does not describe areas of disagreement in the planned restoration work.
- The application does not describe in detail a plan to build the collaborative nor what problem the collaborative is intending to solve.
- The proposed collaborative appears to be a focused group that is like-minded does not demonstrate a diversity of partnerships; it lacks industry and environmental group partners.
- The applicant does not provide a discussion on how they plan on engaging challengers in collaborative dialogue to support NEPA completion.
- There is concern regarding the proposed scope of work and budget to assemble a forest collaborative. Meeting quarterly is not sufficient to build a new collaborative or to build relationships that are needed to implement federal forest management.
- The application did not describe how decisions would be made, and the technical components are lacking, for example there appears to be a low-level proficiency of the NEPA process in relation to forest management.
- It is not clear what the participant roles will be in the forest collaborative, and the budget largely consists of paying partners to participate in the collaborative which does not align with the intent of this grant program.
- The application does not tie the proposed work to the efforts made by the recently dissolved Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative.

Concluding Analysis

The application describes a proposed collaborative that is lacking the diversity of partnerships and views that are necessary for agreement seeking work. The problem the proposed collaborative is intending to solve is not clearly defined in the application and compensating partners to participate does not meet the intent of the forest collaborative grant program. The review team acknowledges that the applicant has a good track record of completing projects and is a trusted figure in the community which will be a benefit when trying to bring together opposing beliefs around forest management. The applicant is encouraged to consider reapplying after addressing the concerns listed in this evaluation and should consider the use of a facilitator.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

\$0

Review Team Conditions

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

\$0

Staff Conditions

Forest Collaborative Fall 2025

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 224-8008-24807

Project Type: Forest Collaborative

Project Name: Mt. Hood East Zone Forest Collaborative Project

Applicant: Wasco SWCD

Region: Central Oregon

County: Wasco

OWEB Request: \$62,190

Total Cost: \$67,190

Application Description The Hood River Forest Collaborative and Wasco County Forest Collaborative are jointly advancing the South Wasco Ecosystem Restoration (SWER) Project in partnership with the Mt. Hood National Forest. The project spans a diverse and ecologically important landscape from the cold and moist forests near Clear Lake to dry pine-oak woodlands in southern Wasco County. The SWER planning area straddles the Barlow and Hood River Ranger Districts, borders the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation, and represents the largest collaborative project since the inception of the groups.

The need for the SWER Project is clear, more than a century of fire exclusion, coupled with drought and insects outbreaks has created uncharacteristic fuel loads, declining forest health, and increasing wildfire risk to communities, wildlife habitat, and irrigation infrastructure. The collaboratives seek to restore ecological resilience through active management and enhance cultural resources through inclusive, science-based planning that integrates local values and indigenous knowledge.

Through this grant, the collaboratives will ensure effective facilitation and coordination to support project planning. This will include a series of field tours, guest speakers, and development of consensus-based collaborative recommendations. The project will build shared understanding among collaborative partners and accelerate wildfire risk reduction, habitat enhancement, and sustainable timber production.

Partners include Mt Hood National Forest, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Forestry, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Oregon State University Extension, Oregon State Fire Marshal, Wamic Fire Department, Wasco County Board of Commissioners, Northern Oregon Motorcycle and ATV Club, Wasco School District 21, Wasco County SWCD, Hood River SWCD, WKO/High Cascade Inc., Bark, Thrive, and Green Diamond Resource Company.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The application details how the collaborative is an agreement-seeking group with a goal to increase pace/scale of forest restoration.

- The application provides historical context for collaborative work and states the plan for working in a complex forest type.
- The collaborative structure is well-established and supported, has a proven performance history and has a diversity of partners engaged, including industry, environmental groups, and local government.
- The Mt. Hood National Forest is facing highly controversial projects making collaborative involvement extremely important.
- The application provides details on economic outcome objectives, demonstrates technical competency, and provides discusses the accomplishments and challenges of previously funded collaborative projects.
- The application discusses collaborative planning and monitoring and integrates climate adaptation science, including recent findings from OSU's Tree Ring Lab, to build community support.
- The two collaboratives have worked adjacently but it is not clear if they have worked together. This may present a challenge to achieve consensus across groups, yet it is an encouraging development, and the groups have taken important steps (e.g., shared facilitator) to help ensure success.

Concerns

- The application makes generalized statements and lacks details on forest health and wildfire within the proposed project area.
- The application budget does not align well with some of the proposed activities. For example, there are community outreach events and field tours featured in the project schedule, but there is only a minimal budget for materials and supplies, and no budget for travel.
- The application mentions tribal engagement but did not provide details.

Concluding Analysis

The partnering collaboratives are highly functioning groups with a proven track record. They are integrating the best available science on climate adaptation for east side forests and have diverse partnerships in place. Investing in this project will help continue their work and success. The review team encourages the collaboratives to engage more actively with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, particularly on the Crystal Clear Restoration Project.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

\$62,190

Review Team Conditions

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

Staff Recommendation

Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

\$62,190

Staff Conditions

Forest Collaborative Fall 2025

Central Oregon (Region 4)

Application Name: 224-8008-24808

Project Type: Forest Collaborative

Project Name: Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project
Agreements on the Future Range of Variability

Applicant: Discover Your Northwest

Region: Central Oregon

County: Deschutes

OWEB Request: \$64,521

Total Cost: \$154,671

Application Description The Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project (DCFP) proposes to develop a Future Range of Variability (FRV) Addendum to its existing Zones of Agreement (ZoAs) for management of the Deschutes National Forest. This landscape contains highly diverse ecosystems from ponderosa pine and mixed conifer to lodgepole pine and supports vital ecological, economic, and cultural values for communities like Bend, La Pine Sisters, and Sunriver.

The project responds to a growing need for updated, climate-informed guidance for collaborative forest management. The DCFP's current Plant Association Group ZoAs are grounded in the Historic Range of Variability (HRV), which has long served as the standard for defining ecological health and resilience. However, rapid climate change is driving forest conditions beyond historical patterns, creating new ecological realities that challenge both restoration effectiveness and social expectations. Without updated, science-based, socially-informed agreements, restoration work risks becoming less relevant, less impactful, and more socially divisive. To meet this need, the DCFP will engage in a four-phase process: 1) Shared Learning; 2) Field Engagement; 3) Agreement Development; and 4) Social License Development.

Primary project partners who will join the DCFP to lead project planning and coordination include the Deschutes National Forest, The Nature Conservancy, and Oregon State University Extension Services. DCFP members and organizational partners will be engaged every step of the way to ensure a robust and durable set of recommendations are developed. Together, we will work to ensure that future forest restoration treatments are ecologically grounded, socially supported, and resilient to the challenges of a changing climate.

Review Team Evaluation

Strengths

- The collaborative structure is balanced and has diverse partners.
- The collaborative is committed and has a long history of doing forest collaborative work.
- The collaborative has a strong climate change focus and the application sites climate change assessments and principles.

- The collaborative is convening scientific researchers to present to the group and community.
- The application includes a letter of support from the Forest Service documenting engagement.

Concerns

- The climate adaptation partnership with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) in Central Oregon is not discussed in the application.
- The application lacks discussion on the technical assistance/science needed to support the climate working group to move forward.
- It is not clear how the collaborative will achieve greater agreement by pursuing future range of variability because of the subjective nature of this analysis. Future range of variability cannot be directly measured and therefore may make developing a common understanding among forest collaborative participants leading to an increased pace and scale of restoration projects difficult.
- It is not clear how the USFS would use recommendations, developed by the collaborative, to incorporate future range of variability into restoration projects given that the USFS Deschutes Forest Plan standards and guidelines are tied to historic range of variability.
- The application did not demonstrate that the work proposed will result in increased pace scale of forest restoration.
- The application discusses the need for the dry forest Zone of Agreement (ZOA) to be updated, but details are vague on how an update to the ZOA will be used to inform future restoration projects.
- The application discusses economic goals but does not allocate funds in the budget for this work.
- The economic indicators of success were soft and did not document opportunities for local industry participation.
- It is not clear in the application if the proposed work intersects with Northwest Forest Plan amendment.
- The public outreach effort described in the application seems to be focused on a one-way delivery. It is not clear how the collaborative plans to engage in a multi-directional dialogue with the public to help better understand the myriad of ecological issues the forest is facing.

Concluding Analysis

While the collaborative is committed and has a long history of doing forest collaborative work, the application lacks critical information, and details needed to be fleshed out more. The review team recommends that the applicant reapply with more specificity and ties to on-the-ground work and urges the applicant not to rely on future range of variability as a means to achieve a shared understanding of needed management actions. The review team also recommends the applicant draw a clear connection

between the proposed ZOA project and how it will lead to increasing the pace and scale of restoration on the Deschutes National Forest.

Review Team Recommendation to Staff

Do Not Fund

Review Team Priority

N/A

Review Team Recommended Amount

\$0

Review Team Conditions

Staff Recommendation

Staff Follow-Up to Review Team

Staff Recommendation

Do Not Fund

Staff Recommended Amount

\$0

Staff Conditions