



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

---

**Hybrid Board Meeting**  
**Astoria, OR**  
**October 28-29, 2025**

---



# Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

## Meeting Agenda

### October 28-29, 2025

**Location of Meeting:** Holiday Inn Express ([204 W Marine Dr. Astoria, OR 97103](#))

The public is welcome to attend all OWEB Board meetings, and may access the meeting virtually through the following methods:

**YouTube:** [Watch Meeting Livestream](#). *Please note that there may be a slight delay when streaming the meeting live. The recording can be found on YouTube and linked on the meeting website after the meeting.*

#### Zoom

- October 28: [Attend Meeting Virtually: Tuesday](#)  
To call in to Zoom: Dial 1 669 900 6833, ID number 833 4881 3396, and passcode 309929
- October 29: [Attend Meeting Virtually: Wednesday](#)  
To call in to Zoom: Dial 1 669 900 6833, ID number 858 7470 4331, and passcode 506388

#### Meeting Materials

The board materials are available on the [October 28-29, 2025, meeting webpage](#).

*For each agenda item, the time listed is approximate. Anyone interested in a particular agenda item is encouraged to give ample time and listen in to the meeting at least 30 minutes before the approximate agenda item time.*

#### Public comment

OWEB welcomes written or verbal public comment on any agenda item. All written comments and requests to make verbal comments to the board should be submitted using [OWEB's Public Comment Form](#).

The deadline for submitting written comments and requests is **5:00 pm Thursday, October 23, 2025**.

Written comments will be provided to the board before the meeting. Verbal comments are limited to three minutes and will be heard in the public comment periods (Agenda Items D and H).

For additional information on providing public comment, please refer to our website <https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/about-us/Pages/board/meetings.aspx>

#### More Information

If you have any questions about this agenda or the board's procedures, please contact Nicole Bettinardi, OWEB Executive Assistant and Board Liaison, at 503-428-1804 or [Nicole.BETTINARDI@OWEB.oregon.gov](mailto:Nicole.BETTINARDI@OWEB.oregon.gov).

If physical, auditory, language, or other accommodations are needed for this meeting, please contact Nicole Bettinardi as soon as possible, and at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Tuesday, October 28

**Business Meeting Agenda – 8:30 am**

---

Welcome and agenda overview (8:30 am)

**A. Board Member Comments (8:45 am)**

Board representatives from state and federal agencies will provide updates on issues related to the natural resource agency they represent. This is also an opportunity for public and tribal board members to report on their recent activities and share information and comments on a variety of watershed enhancement and community conservation-related topics. *Information item.*

**B. Directors Updates (10:30 am)**

Executive Director Sara O'Brien will update the board on agency business. *Information item.*

**C. General Board Business (11:00 am)**

This time is reserved for the board to act on routine items. Items for potential board action include the meeting minutes from July 2025, receiving funds from the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and a time extension for an Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program conservation easement project. *Action item.*

**D. Public Comment (11:15 am)**

This time is reserved for the board to hear public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. *Information item.*

**E. Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Technical Assistance (TA) Grant Awards (11:30 pm)**

Federal Program Specialist Heidi Hartman and Monitoring & Reporting Manager Courtney Shaff will provide an overview of the CREP TA grant offering and outline staff recommendations for the grant awards. *Action item.*

**F. Focused Investment Partnership Grant Program (FIP) Cohort 2 Report - Clackamas (1:00 pm)**

Partnership Coordinator Denise Hoffert will introduce representatives from the Clackamas Basin Partnership who will update the board on their FIP initiative progress. *Information Item.*

**G. OWEB Monitoring Grants 101 (1:25 pm)**

Effectiveness Monitoring Coordinator & Tribal Liaison Ken Fetcho and Monitoring & Reporting Manager Courtney Shaff will provide an overview of OWEB's monitoring grant programs. *Information item.*

**Board Tour – 3:00 pm**

---

The board and OWEB staff will conduct a field tour of tidal restoration efforts on South Tongue Point by partners from Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST), Clatsop Community College, Columbia Land Trust, Bonneville Power Administration, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. South Tongue Point is located on a priority reach of the Columbia River east of Astoria. The project restored 14.45 acres of high-quality tidal foraging and refuge habitat for juvenile salmon by developing large tidal channel networks into the Columbia River shoreline, improving aquatic habitat for fish and other species in this valuable location in the watershed. Anyone is welcome to join the tour. Be prepared to provide your own transportation and for inclement weather. *Information only.*

Wednesday, October 29

**Business Meeting Agenda – 8:30 am**

---

Welcome (8:30 am)

**H. Public Comment (8:35 am)**

This time is reserved for the board to hear public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. *Information item.*

**I. Water Acquisitions Panel (8:50 am)**

Water Acquisitions & Capacity Coordinator Brian Wolcott and Acquisitions & Special Programs Manager Renee Davis and a panel of partners will provide background about OWEB's Water Acquisition grant program and the process for developing and reviewing water acquisition projects, then provide an opportunity for board discussion with the panel and OWEB staff. Anticipated panel members include: Anton Chiono, Habitat Conservation Project Leader, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Department of Natural Resources; Kate Fitzpatrick, Executive Director, Deschutes River Conservancy; Femke Freiberg, Western Water Program Director, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Jessica Humphreys, Oregon Flow Restoration Director, Trout Unlimited; Chris Kowitz, North Central Region Manager, Oregon Water Resources Department; and Spencer Sawaske, Habitat Division Deputy Administrator, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. *Information item.*

**J. Committee Updates (10:20 am)**

Representatives from board committees will provide written updates on committee topics to the full board. *Information item.*

**K. Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) Ecological Priorities (10:30 am)**

Restoration Grants Manager Eric Williams, Partnerships Coordinator Denise Hoffert, and Senior Policy Coordinator Eric Hartstein will present draft revisions to the FIP ecological priorities and request board feedback. *Information item.*

**L. Land Acquisition Grant Program Modernization Update (11:25 am)**

Acquisitions & Special Programs Manager Renee Davis, Executive Director Sara O'Brien, and Land Acquisition Grants Coordinator Miriam Forney will provide an overview of the land acquisition grant program modernization process that is in progress. *Information item.*

**M. Other Business (11:55 am)**

This item is reserved for other matters that may come before the board. *Information item.*



## Meeting Rules and Procedures

### Meeting Procedures

Generally, agenda items will be taken in the order shown. However, in certain circumstances, the board may elect to take an item out of order. Additionally, topics not listed on the agenda may be introduced during the meeting.

Oregon's Public Meetings Law requires disclosure that board members may meet for meals when OWEB meetings convene.

### Voting Rules

The OWEB Board has 18 members. Of these, 11 are voting members and 7 are non-voting advisory members. For purposes of conducting business, OWEB's voting requirements are divided into 2 categories – general business and action on grant awards.

#### Action on General Business

For general business, a quorum is **6 voting members**. General business requires a majority of **all** voting members to pass a resolution (not just those present), so general business resolutions require affirmative votes of **at least 6 voting members**. Typical resolutions include adopting, amending, or appealing a rule, providing staff direction, etc. These resolutions cannot include a funding decision.

#### Action on Funding Decisions

Per ORS 541.900(4), special requirements apply when OWEB considers action on funding decisions such as grant awards. This includes a special **quorum of at least 8 voting members** present to act on grant awards, and affirmative votes of at least six voting members. Regardless of the number of members present, **if 3 or more voting members** object to an award of funds, the proposal will be rejected.

### Executive Session

The board may also convene in a confidential executive session where, by law, only press members and OWEB staff may attend. Others will be asked to leave the room during these discussions, which usually deal with current or potential litigation. Before convening such a session, the presiding board member will make a public announcement and explain necessary procedures.

## Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Membership

### **Voting Members**

Elizabeth Agpaoa, *Board of Forestry*  
Barbara Boyer, *Board of Agriculture*  
Bruce Buckmaster, *Public*  
Kelly Coates, *Board Co-Chair, Public, Tribal Representative*  
Russ Hoeflich, *Public*  
Mark Labhart, *Fish & Wildlife Commission*  
Liza Jane McAlister, *Public*  
Lindsay McClary, *Board Co-Chair, Public*  
Jamie McLeod-Skinner, *Public*  
Mark Webb, *Environmental Quality Commission*  
Woody Wolfe, *Water Resources Commission*

### **Non-voting Members**

Annie Birnie, *National Marine Fisheries Service*  
Dan Brown, *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*  
Aaron Curtis, *U.S. Bureau of Land Management*  
Jessi Kershner, *Oregon State University Extension Service*  
Brian Staab, *U.S Forest Service*  
Claire Tachella, *U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service*  
Michele Zwartjes, *U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*

## Contact Information

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360  
Salem, Oregon 97301-1290  
Tel: 503-428-1804 / Fax: 503-986-0199  
[www.oregon.gov/OWEB](http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB)

**OWEB Executive Director** – Sara O'Brien  
[Sara.E.OBRIEN@OWEB.oregon.gov](mailto:Sara.E.OBRIEN@OWEB.oregon.gov)

**OWEB Executive Assistant & Board Liaison**  
– Nicole Bettinardi  
[Nicole.BETTINARDI@OWEB.oregon.gov](mailto:Nicole.BETTINARDI@OWEB.oregon.gov)

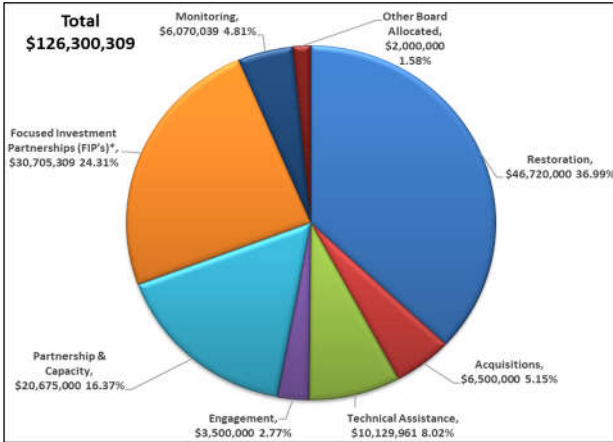
### **2026 Board Meeting Schedule**

January 27-28 – Virtual  
April 28-29 – Cow Creek Band of Umpqua  
Tribe of Indians Reservation  
July 28-29 – The Dalles  
Oct 27-28 – Burns

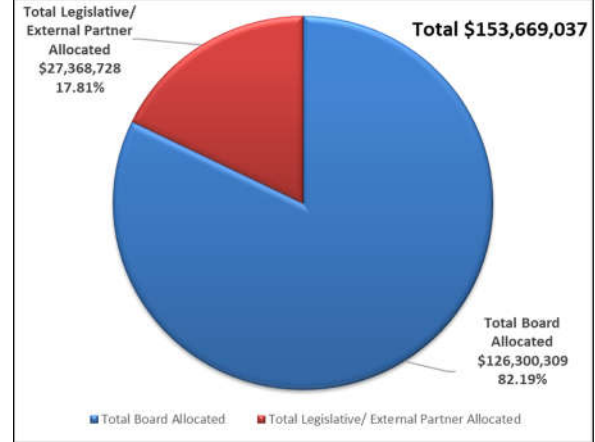
For online access to staff reports and other  
OWEB publications, visit our website:  
[www.oregon.gov/OWEB](http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB).

**OWEB 2025-2027 GRANT FUNDS SPENDING PLAN**  
**October 2025 Board Meeting**

**2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan -  
Grant Types in Board Allocated Funding**



**2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan - Board Allocated Funding and  
Legislative/External Partner Allocated Funding**



	GRANT PROGRAMS	July 2025 Spending Plan	October 2025 Proposed Additions	2025-2027 Spending Plan	Awarded to Date	October 2025 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Spending Plan after Awards
	<b>Board Allocated Funding</b>							
1	<b>Restoration</b>							
2	Open Solicitation	37,380,000		37,380,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 37,380,000
3	Weed Grants	3,500,000		3,500,000	\$ 3,500,000	\$ -	\$ 3,500,000	\$ -
4	Small Grants	4,760,000		4,760,000	\$ 4,760,000	\$ -	\$ 4,760,000	\$ -
5	Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership	330,000		330,000	\$ 330,000	\$ -	\$ 330,000	\$ -
6	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Prog (CREP)-Cost Share	750,000		750,000	\$ 750,000	\$ -	\$ 750,000	\$ -
7	<b>Total Restoration</b>	<b>\$ 46,720,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 46,720,000</b>	<b>\$ 9,340,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 9,340,000</b>	<b>\$ 37,380,000</b>
8	<b>Acquisitions</b>							
9	Land and Water Acquisition	6,500,000		6,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,500,000
10	<b>Total Acquisitions</b>	<b>\$ 6,500,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 6,500,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 6,500,000</b>
11	<b>Technical Assistance</b>							
12	Open Solicitation	7,500,000		7,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,500,000
13	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) TA <sup>(2)</sup>	1,600,000	\$ 29,961	1,629,961	\$ -	\$ 1,629,961	\$ 1,629,961	\$ -
14	Tribal Project Development	1,000,000		1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -
15	<b>Total Technical Assistance</b>	<b>\$ 10,100,000</b>	<b>\$ 29,961</b>	<b>\$ 10,129,961</b>	<b>\$ 1,000,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,629,961</b>	<b>\$ 2,629,961</b>	<b>\$ 7,500,000</b>
16	<b>Engagement</b>							
17	Open Solicitation	2,000,000		2,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000
18	Strategic Implementation Areas <sup>(1)</sup>	1,500,000		1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ -	\$ 1,500,000	\$ -
19	<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>\$ 3,500,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 3,500,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,500,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 1,500,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>
20	<b>Partnership &amp; Capacity</b>							
21	Capacity grants - Watershed Councils (WC)	9,900,000		9,900,000	\$ 9,899,792	\$ -	\$ 9,899,792	\$ 208
22	Capacity grants - Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD)	8,700,000		8,700,000	\$ 8,700,000	\$ -	\$ 8,700,000	\$ -
23	Statewide Organizational Conservation Partnership Support	525,000		525,000	\$ 525,000	\$ -	\$ 525,000	\$ -
24	Partnership Technical Assistance	1,200,000		1,200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,200,000
25	Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership	350,000		350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ -	\$ 350,000	\$ -
26	<b>Total Partnership &amp; Capacity</b>	<b>\$ 20,675,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 20,675,000</b>	<b>\$ 19,474,792</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 19,474,792</b>	<b>\$ 1,200,208</b>
27	<b>Focused Investment Partnerships (FIP) <sup>(1)</sup> :</b>							
28	<b>Cohort 3 - 3rd Biennium</b>							
29	Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network	2,959,837		2,959,837	\$ 2,959,837	\$ -	\$ 2,959,837	\$ -
30	East Cascades Oak & Fire Partnership	2,177,000		2,177,000	\$ 2,177,000	\$ -	\$ 2,177,000	\$ -
31	Siuslaw Coho Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
32	Coos Basin Coho Partnership	3,747,408		3,747,408	\$ 3,747,408	\$ -	\$ 3,747,408	\$ -
33	Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative	2,390,250		2,390,250	\$ 2,390,250	\$ -	\$ 2,390,250	\$ -
34	<b>Cohort 4 - 2nd Biennium</b>							
35	Hood River Basin Partnership	3,503,414		3,503,414	\$ 3,503,414	\$ -	\$ 3,503,414	\$ -
36	Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
37	Oregon Sage-Grouse Partnership	4,000,000		4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
38	Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative	3,927,400		3,927,400	\$ 3,927,400	\$ -	\$ 3,927,400	\$ -
39	<b>Total FIP's</b>	<b>\$ 30,705,309</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 30,705,309</b>	<b>\$ 30,705,309</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 30,705,309</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
40	<b>Monitoring</b>							
41	Open Solicitation	5,000,000		5,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000
42	Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes	600,000	\$ (29,961)	570,039	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 570,039
43	FIP Effectiveness Monitoring	500,000		500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ -
44	<b>Total Monitoring</b>	<b>\$ 6,100,000</b>	<b>\$ (29,961)</b>	<b>\$ 6,070,039</b>	<b>\$ 500,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 500,000</b>	<b>\$ 5,570,039</b>
45	<b>Other Board Allocated</b>							
46	Governor's Priorities	2,000,000		2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -
47	<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
48	<b>TOTAL BOARD ALLOCATED</b>	<b>\$ 126,300,309</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 126,300,309</b>	<b>\$ 64,520,101</b>	<b>\$ 1,629,961</b>	<b>\$ 66,150,062</b>	<b>\$ 60,150,247</b>
49	<b>Percent (%) of OWEB Grant Funds Spending Plan total</b>	<b>82.53%</b>		<b>82.19%</b>				
50	<b>Board Approved Unallocated Funds</b>			<b>13,325,337</b>				

	GRANT PROGRAMS	July 2025 Spending Plan	October 2025 Proposed Additions	2025-2027 Spending Plan	Awarded to Date	October 2025 Proposed Awards	TOTAL Awards To-Date & Proposed Awards	Remaining Spending Plan after Awards
<b>Legislative/External Partner Allocated</b>								
51	<b>Restoration</b>							
52	Bureau of Land Management-Good Neighbor Authority <sup>(1)</sup>	5,000,000		5,000,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -
53	Upper Klamath Water Quality Improvements-PacifiCorp IM11	5,709,407		5,709,407	\$ 5,709,407	\$ -	\$ 5,709,407	\$ -
54	Watershed Natural Climate Solutions Fund <sup>(3)</sup>	1,497,476		1,497,476	\$ 1,497,476	\$ -	\$ 1,497,476	\$ -
55	<b>Total Restoration</b>	<b>\$ 12,206,883</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 12,206,883</b>	<b>\$ 12,206,883</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 12,206,883</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
56	<b>Acquisitions</b>							
57	Water Acquisition - Flexible Incentive Account	5,000,000		5,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000
58	Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP)	1,760,000		1,760,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,760,000
	Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) - Watershed							
59	Natural Climate Solutions Fund <sup>(3)</sup>	752,524		752,524	\$ 752,524	\$ -	\$ 752,524	\$ -
60	<b>Total Acquisitions</b>	<b>\$ 7,512,524</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 7,512,524</b>	<b>\$ 752,524</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 752,524</b>	<b>\$ 6,760,000</b>
61	<b>Technical Assistance</b>							
62	USDA-NRCS Farm Bill Technical Assistance Amendment		\$ 363,722	363,722	\$ -	\$ 363,722	\$ 363,722	\$ -
63	<b>Total Technical Assistance</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 363,722</b>	<b>\$ 363,722</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 363,722</b>	<b>\$ 363,722</b>	
64	<b>Partnership &amp; Capacity</b>							
65	Forest Health Collaborative-Oregon Department of Forestry	350,000		350,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 350,000
66	<b>Total Partnership &amp; Capacity</b>	<b>\$ 350,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 350,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 350,000</b>
67	<b>Monitoring</b>							
	Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission-(PSMFC) Intensively							
68	Monitored Watersheds	-	\$ 264,597	264,597	\$ -	\$ 264,597	\$ 264,597	\$ -
69	<b>Total Monitoring</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 264,597</b>	<b>\$ 264,597</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 264,597</b>	<b>\$ 264,597</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
70	<b>Other Legislative/External Partner Allocated</b>							
71	Oregon Dept of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW)-PCSRF(Federal Funds)	6,671,002		6,671,002	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -	\$ 6,671,002	\$ -
72	<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$ 6,671,002</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 6,671,002</b>	<b>\$ 6,671,002</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 6,671,002</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
73	<b>TOTAL LEGISLATIVE/EXTERNAL PARTNER ALLOCATED</b>	<b>\$ 26,740,409</b>	<b>\$ 628,319</b>	<b>\$ 27,368,728</b>	<b>\$ 19,630,409</b>	<b>\$ 628,319</b>	<b>\$ 20,258,728</b>	<b>\$ 7,110,000</b>
74	<b>Percent (%) of OWEB Grant Funds Spending Plan total</b>	<b>17.47%</b>		<b>17.81%</b>	<b>\$ -</b>		<b>\$ -</b>	
					<b>\$ -</b>		<b>\$ -</b>	
	<b>TOTAL OWEB 2025-2027 Grant Spending Plan</b>	<b>\$ 153,040,718</b>	<b>\$ 628,319</b>	<b>\$ 153,669,037</b>	<b>\$ 84,150,510</b>	<b>\$ 2,258,280</b>	<b>\$ 86,408,790</b>	<b>\$ 67,260,247</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> This program may include a variety of grant types (e.g. Restoration, Engagement, Technical Assistance, and Acquisition, etc.)

<sup>(2)</sup> This includes NRCS CREP TA funds awarded of \$162,532

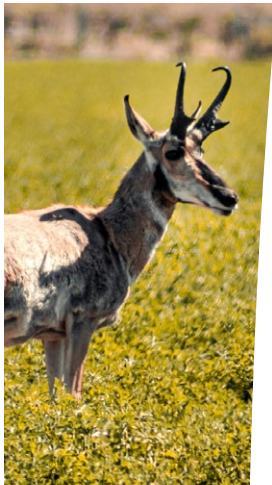
<sup>(3)</sup> These funds total \$2.25M from the 2023-2025 OCAC allocation to OWEB





The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) provides grants to help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies.

Eligible applicants include not-for-profit organizations, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Tribes, Watershed Councils, political subdivisions of the state that are not state agencies, schools, community colleges, Oregon State institutions of higher education, and independent not-for-profit institutions of higher education. State and federal agencies are not eligible grantees but are often partners on OWEB-funded projects. In addition to those listed below, OWEB may offer grant types based on legislative priorities.



Land Acquisition

### Acquisition

[Conservation Easement \(Ag Heritage\)](#)  
[Drinking Water Source Protection](#)  
[Land Acquisition](#)  
[Water Acquisition](#)

Acquire interests in land or water from willing sellers. Acquisitions result in legally or contractually protected land or instream flow for the benefit of watersheds, habitats for native fish and wildlife, to protect drinking water, and to protect working lands.



Sage Grouse Conservation Engagement Grant

### Focused Investment Partnership

[Focused Investment Partnerships](#)

Landscape-scale restoration investments that address board-identified priorities. Successful FIPs achieve clear and measurable ecological outcomes; use integrated, results-oriented approaches and are implemented by a high-performing partnership. Funds partnerships with up to \$12 million over 6 years.



Oak Woodland (FIP)

### Engagement

[Engagement](#)

Communicate and engage with landowners, organizations, and the community about the need for, feasibility of, and benefits of eligible project(s) within an identified geography. Education projects are not eligible.

### Monitoring

[Monitoring](#)

Monitor, gather, analyze, and share watershed data with the public. May describe current watershed conditions, establish trends about watershed conditions, or evaluate specific before-and-after effects of a project.

### Partnerships & Capacity

[Operating Capacity](#)  
[Organizational Collaboration](#)  
[Partnership TA](#)

Support operations of SWCDs, WC, and other partnership organizations.

### Restoration

[Coastal Wetlands](#)  
[Invasive & Noxious Weeds \(ODA\)](#)  
[Restoration](#)  
[Small Grants](#)

Protect or restore watershed functions for instream, riparian, upland, and wetland or estuarine habitat.

### Technical Assistance (TA)

[CREP TA](#)  
[NRCS/OWEB Farm Bill TA](#)  
[Technical Assistance](#)  
[Technical Assistance and Conservation Management Planning \(Ag Heritage\)](#)

Develop a technical design or implementation plan for restoration, including consideration for compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act.



Coastal Wetlands Monitoring



Coho Habitat Restoration



Floodplain Restoration



# OREGON WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT BOARD

## Public Comment

### Agenda Items D and H

Submitted written public comment will be published in a supplemental document after the board meeting and posted on the OWEB [October 28-29, 2025 meeting webpage](#).

## Application Evaluations

### Agenda Item E

Written Evaluations for all grant applications that will be considered by the board during this meeting can be found in a [supplemental document](#) posted on the OWEB [October 28-29, 2025 meeting webpage](#).

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item B

## **Director's Updates**

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025





OREGON  
WATERSHED  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD



Astoria wharf, Erica Stange, ODOT, cc

# 2025-2028 Strategic Plan

Quarterly Report to the Board | October 2025



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

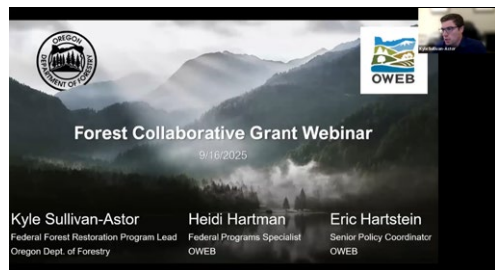


Each quarterly report describes key accomplishments under Strategies that have been identified for each of the six Strategic Plan priorities. See the last page for the full list of Strategies, and a summary of when accomplishments were reported throughout the calendar year.



## Priority 1

**Build awareness of the relationship between people and watershed protection and restoration.**



Recordings of webinars and open office hours are posted on OWEB's YouTube channel.

**Strategy 1.2 Virtual Office Hours and interactive webinars** were offered for:

- [Conservation Covenant and Easement grant program](#)
- [Forest Collaborative grant program](#)
- [Land Acquisition grant program](#)
- [Small Grant Team Contact Engagement grant program](#)



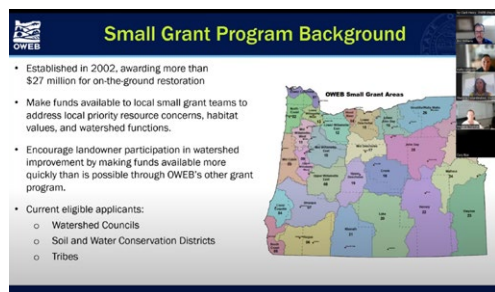
[Social media posts](#) promoting the Integrated Water Resources Strategy.

**Strategy 1.3** Worked with OWRD and other agencies to complete the [Integrated Water Resources Strategy \(IWRS\)](#) and bring awareness to it through social media posts.



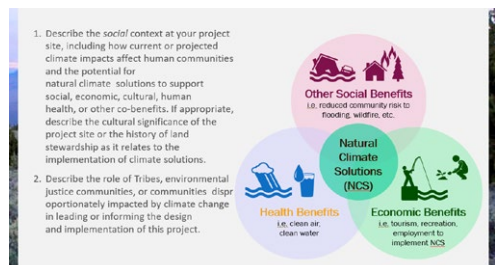
## Priority 2

**Engage the diversity of Oregonians in watershed enhancement work.**



[Small Grant Team Contact webinar](#).

**Strategy 2.1 (& 2.2)** OWEB hosted a **webinar** on June 30, 2025, for all eligible OWEB organizations to learn more about the **Small Grant Team Contact engagement grant** offered through the Small Grant Program. This grant offering supports facilitation of grant application review processes for Small Grant projects.



Technical Review Team Orientation.

**Strategy 2.3 (& 6.1)** OWEB convened a **new Technical Review Team with expertise in climate change and equity** for the Natural and Working Lands offering, in which 8 of the 11 people were new to the process. Prior to the review meetings, OWEB trained the team on how to evaluate projects according to the legislative intent around supporting natural climate solutions and community co-benefits, as well as OWEB's existing criteria for restoration and technical assistance applications.







## Priority 5

**Increase connection of urban and working lands to watershed health.**



**Strategy 5.2** At the July board meeting, board members and OWEB staff visited a restoration project on Birch Creek and the Umatilla River implemented by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation with partners, including the Blue Mountain Land Trust, the Umatilla Soil and Water Conservation District, landowner Jim Whitney, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The project is focused on restoring instream habitat and floodplain connection, along with a **conservation easement** permanently protecting 942 acres and 3.72 miles of the Umatilla River and Birch Creek.

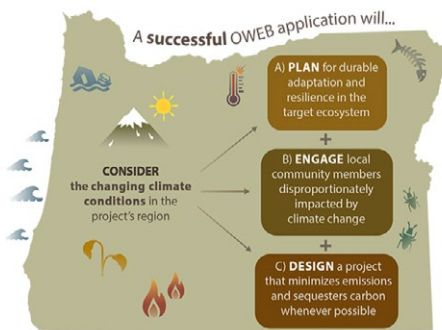


Birch Creek tour.



## Priority 6

**Take bold and innovative action toward climate resilience.**



Climate criteria diagram.

**Strategy 6.2** OWEB has updated the [Water and Climate webpage](#) to provide applicants and grantees with **resources that map to the climate evaluation criteria**. The site also includes a diagram intended to help visualize the climate criteria as an equation of the three criteria in the specific local context of changing climate conditions.





Carbon & Culture Symposium invite.

**Strategy 6.2 (& 4.2)** In September, OWEB's Water & Climate Coordinator attended the joint [CTUIR/DEQ Carbon and Culture Symposium](#) and **presented about OWEB offerings for natural climate solutions and the opportunities for Tribes to access the forthcoming Environmental Restoration Fund**. The symposium brought together Tribal knowledge keepers, land managers, academics, and state government to discuss opportunities for natural and geologic carbon sequestration activities on Tribally owned and managed lands.

# Strategies Chart

January 2025- October 2025











 accomplishments  
 highlighted in quarterly update

 January  
 April  
 July  
 October

## 1 Through our grantmaking, build awareness of the relationship between the people of Oregon and watershed protection and restoration

1.1 Elevate the story of how protection and restoration promote healthy watersheds				
1.2 Connect people around watershed work				
1.3 Increase use of OWEB's engagement grant offering to support grantees doing community engagement				

## 2 Leverage our position as an anchor funder to engage the diversity of Oregonians in watershed enhancement

2.1 Enhance OWEB presence throughout Oregon				
2.2 Increase diversity and inclusion through improving access to our programs				
2.3 Engage organizations, entities, and communities that have not traditionally been involved in watershed restoration work				

## 3 Use our funding to strengthen and leverage people and organizational capacity to achieve healthy watersheds

3.1 Support diverse funding opportunities to sustain the capacity of partners				
3.2 Expand training for partners				



## 4 Advance learning about watershed restoration effectiveness through coordinated monitoring

4.1 Facilitate learning through monitoring				
4.2 Learn, share and support efforts to integrate indigenous knowledge				
4.3 Communicate data-driven outcomes to guide restoration investments				

## 5 Increase investment connecting urban and working lands to watershed health

5.1 Promote value of multi benefit watershed projects				
5.2 Increase investment connecting of urban and working lands to watershed health				
5.3 Support and fund grantees building or expanding partnerships with urban constituencies				

## 6 Take bold and innovative action toward funding projects that advance climate resilience

6.1 Increase support for bold and innovative grant making in service to watershed restoration and protection				
6.2 Articulate the benefits of watershed protection and restoration for climate resiliency				



This report provides the board updates on upcoming OWEB rulemaking efforts.

## Background

Grant programs at OWEB are guided by administrative rules. Rules cover topics, such as project eligibility, application requirements, evaluation criteria, technical review processes, and funding decisions for OWEB grant programs/types.

OWEB regularly conducts rulemaking to update existing rules and establish rules for new programs. Generally, rulemaking takes 12 months from board initiation to rule adoption. During those 12 months, OWEB staff recruit a Rulemaking Advisory Committee (RAC) through a process consistent with Oregon Administrative Procedures law (ORS 183.333) that requires the committee to be made up of entities most likely to be impacted by the rules, develop draft rule language, hold several RAC meetings to discuss rule language, and provide formal tribal and public notification to receive comments on draft rules. The schedule may be abbreviated in instances where a RAC is not involved in rulemaking.

The process begins when staff requests the board initiate rulemaking in an [OWEB rules division](#). At that time, staff will provide a high-level overview of what is intended to be accomplished with rulemaking and describe the draft schedule. For rulemaking efforts that involve a RAC, staff will provide the board a progress update on key emerging themes of the draft rules at a second meeting near the middle of the rulemaking. At a third board meeting, staff will bring a final draft set of rules for board consideration for adoption.

## Rulemaking Schedule

The following table describes the tentative schedule for current and future OWEB rulemaking. It does not include rulemaking associated with the new Oregon Environmental Restoration Council established in SB 1561 (2024), but it is assumed that OWEB staff will also be involved in the development of rules for those programs in 2025. The timeframes in the table below may be adjusted due to workload.

Administrative Rules	Board Initiate Rulemaking	Board Consideration for Adoption - Proposed
Water Acquisition Grants (Division 46)	July 2025	July 2026
Land Acquisition Grants (Division 45)	January 2026-July 2026	January 2027-July 2027



October 28-29, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

## Executive Director Update B-3: Update on Programmatic Agreement with OWEB and National Marine Fisheries Service

---

This report provides the board an update on the Programmatic Agreement between OWEB and National Marine Fisheries Service.

### Background

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) applies annually for Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF) from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and awards these funds through various grant programs. These funds are mainly used in restoration and technical assistance projects that benefit salmon and steelhead. In 2022, OWEB and the NMFS began developing a Programmatic Agreement (PA) for PCSRF projects to delegate responsibilities of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) to OWEB. Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects on historic properties of projects they carry out, assist, fund, permit, license, or approve. OWEB has historically relied on its grantees to self-report and track permits required for project implementation in the application and grant agreement. Under the PA, OWEB is responsible for ensuring that the grantees are in compliance with Section 106. This applies to all grants funded by PCSRF, as well as those utilizing Oregon Lottery funds used to meet its 33% required match to NOAA. The PA also applies to PCSRF funds provided to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Prior to signing the PA OWEB coordinated with the cultural and natural resource staff of the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon, as well as the Nez Perce Tribe to seek input on how best to coordinate and communicate once the PA was signed. The focus of these meetings was for the cultural resources staff from OWEB and the tribes to meet, discuss the PA, and allow the tribes to communicate any preferences they have around consultation on future projects.

### Status Update

After more than three years of collaborative work, the National Marine Fisheries Service, Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and OWEB signed the PA on August 12, 2025, delegating the responsibilities of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) to OWEB. Applications awarded after this date and funded with PCSRF funds or Lottery funds used to meet OWEB's 33% match requirement must comply with the PA.

During the last year, ahead of implementation, OWEB has developed many resources for OWEB grantees to assist with the transition including webinars, training videos and a new OWEB website with a variety of resources to assist local partners in project planning and implementation. OWEB's Cultural Resources Specialist is also available to answer questions from potential applicants and provide guidance while they are developing applications. Application awarded in January 2026 through the Open Solicitation grant cycle will be the first set of these applications that are awarded under the signed PA.

### Attachments

- A. Guidance on Cultural Resources Compliance for OWEB Grants





# Guidance on **CULTURAL RESOURCES COMPLIANCE** for OWEB Grants

## Background




The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) applies annually for Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF) from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and awards these funds through various grant programs. These funds are mainly used in restoration and technical assistance projects that benefit salmon and steelhead.

In August 2025, OWEB, the NMFS, along with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, signed a [Programmatic Agreement \(PA\)](#) for PCSRF projects, delegating the responsibilities of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) to OWEB. Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects on historic properties of projects they carry out, assist, fund, permit, license, or approve.

OWEB has historically relied on its grantees to self-report and track permits required for project implementation in the application and grant agreement. Under the PA, OWEB is responsible for ensuring that the grantees are in compliance with Section 106. This includes reviewing projects to ensure alignment with the PA, examining cultural resource reports, and submitting the appropriate documentation to the SHPO and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Under the PA, OWEB is required to review all grants funded by PCSRF, as well as those utilizing Oregon Lottery funds used to meet its 33% required match to NOAA. The information below is intended to help OWEB applicants understand these new requirements.

### The PA applies to all land in Oregon that:




-  Falls within the Recovery Domains for ESA-listed salmon and steelhead.
-  Does not already have another established federal PA.
-  Is not under Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) jurisdiction. THPO has authority in lieu of the Oregon SHPO.

---

## Impacts to Grantees

OWEB grantees are accustomed to ensuring Section 106 compliance when working with federal funds and working on federal lands; these federal nexuses are triggers for compliance with federal laws. Grantees that are now funded with Oregon Lottery funds but are located within the Recovery Domains for ESA-listed salmon and steelhead will have to plan to demonstrate compliance with Section 106 and budget in technical assistance and restoration applications for cultural resources review.

### Applicants should consider the following when planning projects:

-  Contact a qualified archaeological contractor and the federally recognized tribes' THPO office early in the project planning process to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts to cultural resources. The [Oregon SHPO](#) provides a helpful bulletin for individuals and organizations interested in hiring an archaeologist and the [Association of Oregon Archaeologists](#) offers a contractor directory.
-  Apply for a Technical Assistance (TA) grant and budget time and expenses for cultural resources requirements in the TA grant prior to applying for a restoration grant.
-  Complete as much cultural resource work as possible during the design phase of the project to reduce delays. If cultural resource work has not begun by the time grantees apply for a restoration grant, the review may note concerns about unknown budget costs and delays in the project timeline.

## How OWEB Can Help

**Projects in the design phase** are able to request funds for cultural resources work through OWEB's TA grant program. The applicant is encouraged to identify the [Area of Potential Effect \(APE\)](#) during the design phase.

**Projects in the implementation phase** may include costs for cultural resources work to be done in the restoration grant application.

OWEB encourages applicants to reach out to cultural resources consulting firms to assist in budgeting or conducting a pre-review early in the project development phase. Costs for cultural resources work depend on the scope, scale, and location of the project. A survey in a low-probability area may cost \$2,000-\$5,000. A survey for a larger project or activities in a high-probability area (or known site) could cost \$50,000 or more.

OWEB also encourages applicants to contact the local Tribal Natural and Cultural Resource offices and share the project site and scope early in the life of the project to identify any potential areas of concern that may be included in the planning and design phase. The Legislative Commission on Indian Services has contact information for each Tribe's Cultural Resources staff.

## Questions?

OWEB will do everything possible to work with grantees to answer questions in a timely manner. Please contact: [Cultural.Resources@oweb.Oregon.gov](mailto:Cultural.Resources@oweb.Oregon.gov) | 971-345-7756

## Three Activity Categories

The activities listed below are categorized based on project types that qualify for PCSRF funding and are subject to change as the PA is finalized in July 2024.



1

### **EXEMPT** from Section 106 Review

Activities with very minimal to no potential to cause effects to historic properties.



2

### **ASSESSED** for Exemptions from Section 106

Activities with **variable potential to affect historic properties** will be subject to a screening process prior to being excluded from further Section 106 review.



3

### **REQUIRE** Full Section 106 Review

Activities with the **potential to affect historic properties** will require full project review and consultation.





## 1 **EXEMPT** from Section 106



## 2 **ASSESSED** for Exemptions from Section 106 Review



## 3 **REQUIRE** Full 106 Review

<p><b>Water Quality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carcass or nutrient placement</li> </ul>	<p><b>Water Quality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refuse/debris removal</li> <li>• Sewage clean-up</li> <li>• Toxin reduction</li> <li>• Livestock manure management</li> <li>• Stormwater/wastewater</li> </ul>	<p><b>Water Quality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return flow cooling</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Riparian Habitat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Riparian planting</li> <li>• Riparian exclusion and fencing</li> <li>• Water gap development</li> <li>• Riparian plant removal/control</li> <li>• Debris/structure removal</li> <li>• Conservation grazing management</li> </ul>	<p><b>Riparian Habitat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forestry Practices/Stand Management</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Instream Habitat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streambank stabilization</li> <li>• Spawning gravel placement</li> <li>• Plant removal/control</li> <li>• Beaver introduction/ management</li> <li>• Predator/ competitor removal</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instream Habitat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Channel reconfiguration and connectivity</li> <li>• Channel structure placement</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Estuarine/Nearshore</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of existing fill material</li> <li>• Fill placement</li> <li>• Estuarine plant removal/control</li> <li>• Shoreline armor removal or modification</li> <li>• Beach nourishment</li> <li>• Contaminant removal/remediation</li> <li>• Debris removal</li> <li>• Overwater structure removal/ modification</li> <li>• Exclusion devices such as fencing</li> <li>• Estuarine planting</li> </ul>	<p><b>Estuarine/Nearshore</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Channel modification</li> <li>• Dike or berm modification removal</li> <li>• Tidegate alteration/ removal</li> <li>• Estuarine culvert modification/ removal</li> <li>• Slope regrading</li> <li>• New estuarine creation</li> </ul>

	<b>Fish Passage Improvements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fish passage at road crossings, barriers, fishways, and weirs</li> <li>• Fishway chutes or pool installation</li> <li>• Fish ladder installation/ improvement</li> <li>• Road stream crossing removal</li> </ul>	<b>Fish Passage Improvements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal or alteration of fish passage blockages</li> <li>• Culvert installation or improvement at road stream crossing</li> <li>• Bridge installation or improved at road stream crossing</li> <li>• Rocked ford-road stream crossing</li> </ul>
<b>Instream Flow</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water flow gages, water leases/ purchases</li> <li>• Maintaining adequate flow or reducing flow</li> </ul>	<b>Instream Flow</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headgate installation</li> <li>• Flow regulation</li> <li>• Withdrawal reductions</li> <li>• Well installation to eliminate a diversion</li> <li>• Piping open canals</li> </ul>	
	<b>Upland Habitat and Sediment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road drainage system improvements and reconstruction</li> <li>• Road closure/ abandonment</li> <li>• Erosion control structures installation</li> <li>• Erosion and sediment control planting</li> <li>• Upland livestock management</li> <li>• Trail or campground management</li> <li>• Upland wetland improvement</li> <li>• Upland agriculture management, such as low or no-till</li> <li>• Upland irrigation management</li> </ul>	<b>Upland Habitat and Sediment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slope stabilization</li> <li>• Upland vegetation management such as juniper removal, thinning, prescribed burning, stand conversions, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Outreach, Education, and Landowner Recruitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach documents/reports/posters</li> <li>• Media material production</li> <li>• Events/ workshops/ training/ presentations</li> <li>• Landowner contact</li> </ul>	<b>Wetland</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wetland planting</li> <li>• Wetland plant removal/control</li> <li>• Wetland improvement/restoration</li> <li>• Artificial wetland creation</li> </ul> <b>Land or Easement Acquisition</b> <b>Other or Unspecified Projects</b>	

## **Salmonid Restoration Planning and Assessments**

- Restoration Planning and Coordination
- Habitat Assessment/Inventory

### **Site Maintenance**

- Irrigating or replanting trees that failed to survive, using only existing infrastructure, hand-tools or other non-destructive methods

### **Pre-Restoration Acquisitions**

- Restoration structures or equipment purchases for future habitat restoration projects

### **Monitoring**

- Adult/smolt/fry salmonids
- Biological instream
- Redd and carcass counts
- Harvest monitoring
- Test fishery
- Water quality and quantity
- Habitat condition
- Post-project implementation or design compliance
- Effectiveness and validation
- Intensively monitored watershed
- Stormwater, wastewater, sewage outfall
- Predator/competitor





OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item C

## **General Board Business**

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025



October 28-29, 2025 OWEB Board Meeting

## General Board Business C-1: July 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

---

MINUTES ARE NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD

### July 22-23, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes

Hybrid Board Meeting

Recording at: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOWlt4Sp--i1KEa\\_OA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOWlt4Sp--i1KEa_OA)

#### OWEB MEMBERS PRESENT

Agpaoa, Elizabeth  
Boyer, Barbara  
Brown, Dan  
Buckmaster, Bruce  
Coates, Kelly  
Curtis, Aaron  
Hoeflich, Russ  
Kershner, Jessi  
Labhart, Mark  
McAlister, Liza Jane  
McClary, Lindsay  
McLeod-Skinner, Jamie  
Staab, Brian  
Tachella, Claire  
Webb, Mark  
Wolfe, Woody

#### OWEB STAFF PRESENT

Bettinardi, Nicole  
Charette, Amy  
Davis, Renee  
Grenbemer, Mark  
Hartstein, Eric  
Larson, Taylor  
Meacher, Robin  
O'Brien, Sara  
Page, Stephanie  
Redon, Liz  
Repplinger, Linda  
Scharer, Miriam  
Schmidt, Alexa  
Shaff, Courtney  
Williams, Eric  
Wolcott, Brian

#### OTHERS

Buttafuoco, Joe  
Castro, Alexis Barton  
Chiono, Anton  
Gallegos, Amanda  
Gannon, Chris  
Halsey, Jack  
Hanson, Ellie  
Harrold, Caitlin  
Iwai, Roy  
Kendrick, Karsyn  
Kreiner, Andrea  
Latzo, Hannah  
Loring, Jim  
Martino, Amanda  
Newton, Cassie  
Preeg Riggsby, Terri  
Rohner, Whitney  
Ruiter, Terry  
Sanchez, Brenda  
Schulman, Neil  
Scribner, Kevin  
Steele, Jesse  
Tattam, Ian  
Webster, Jim  
Winters, Herb  
Yazzie, Lili  
Zettle, Shanda

Tuesday, July 22

---

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by Barbara Boyer: [Recording](#)

#### A. Board Member Comments ([Timestamp = 00:1:16](#))

Board representatives from state and federal agencies provided updates on issues related to the natural resource agency they represent. Public and tribal board members also reported on their recent activities, shared information, and commented on various watershed enhancement and community conservation-related topics. *Information item.*

## **B. Directors Updates (Timestamp = 01:45:50)**

Executive Director Sara O'Brien and staff updated the board on agency business. *Information item.*

## **C. Public Comment (Timestamp = 02:17:34)**

This time was reserved for the board to hear general public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. *Information item.*

All written public comments can be viewed on [OWEB's website](#). The following people provided verbal comments:

- Terri Preeg Riggsby, Network of Oregon Watershed Councils
- Joe Buttafuoco, Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts
- Andrea Kreiner, Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
- Brenda Sanchez, Marion Soil & Water Conservation District
- Neil Schulman, North Clackamas Watershed Council
- Jack Halsey, Oswego Watershed Council
- Alexis Barton Castro, Tryon Creek Watershed Council
- Chris Gannon, Crooked River Watershed Council

## **D. Water Acquisitions Update (Timestamp = 02:50:34)**

Water Acquisition and Capacity Coordinator Brian Wolcott and Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager Renee Davis reviewed with the board feedback received about the 2024-2025 Water Acquisitions grant offering and sought board input and direction ahead of the 2025-2026 Water Acquisitions grant solicitation and upcoming rulemaking. *Information item.*

## **E. General Board Business (Timestamp = 03:41:05)**

This time was reserved for the board to act on routine items. Items for board action included the meeting minutes from April 2025, initiation of rulemaking for the Water Acquisition grant program, and Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program conservation easement time extensions. *Action item.*

Motion #1. Jamie McLeod-Skinner moved the board approve the minutes from the April 22-23, 2025, board meeting. Motion seconded by Lindsay McClary. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Bruce Buckmaster was absent. Motion passed.

Motion #2. Liza Jane McAlister moved the board authorize rulemaking for Water Acquisition Grants in Division 46. Motion seconded by Kelly Coates. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.

Motion #3. Woody Wolfe moved the board extend the grant deadline to October 31, 2025, for Seeley Farm Phase 1 (Grant No. 223-7100-22521) and to October 31, 2025, for Wahl Ranch (Grant No 223-7104-22600). Motion seconded by Bruce Buckmaster. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.

#### **F. 2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan Adoption (Timestamp = 03:52:00)**

Deputy Director Stephanie Page and Business Operations Manager/Fiscal Officer Miriam Scharer presented an overview of the 2025-2027 spending plan, funds available for board allocation, and recommended amounts to allocate to grant programs. *Action Item.*

Motion #1. Lindsay McClary moved the board approve receipt of up to \$5 million in funds from the Bureau of Land Management in the “Legislative/Other Partner Allocated” section of the spending plan. Motion seconded by Barbara Boyer. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.

Motion #2. Jamie McLeod-Skinner moved the board approve the spending plan line items in the “Recommended 2025-2027” column of Attachment A and approve the tables in Attachments C and D regarding spending plan policy decisions and delegation authorities for the spending plan. Motion seconded by Mark Labhart. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m. by co-chair Barbara Boyer.**

Wednesday, July 23

---

**The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Barbara Boyer: [Recording](#)**

#### **G. Committee Updates (Timestamp = 00:01:48)**

Committee Co-Chairs provided updates on committee topics to the full board. *Information item.*

#### **H. Public Comment (Timestamp = 00:22:25)**

This time was reserved for the board to hear general public comments *Information item.*

All written public comments can be viewed on [OWEB's website](#). The following people provided verbal comments:

- Anton Chiono, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservations (CTUIR)
- Roy Iwai, Sandy River Watershed Council
- Lili Yazzi, Sandy River Watershed Council
- Karsyn Kendrick, Coalition of Land Trusts

#### **I. 2025-2027 Council Capacity Grant Awards (Timestamp = 01:11:02)**

Water Acquisition and Capacity Coordinator Brian Wolcott and Monitoring and Reporting Manager Courtney Shaff provided an overview of the 2025-2027 Council Capacity grant offering and outlined staff recommendations for the grant awards. *Action item.*

Lindsay McClary moved the board award council capacity grants as described in Attachment B with an award date of July 1, 2025. Motion seconded by Mark Webb. Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Liz Agpaoa and Jamie McLeod-Skinner voted against. Motion passed.

**J. Natural and Working Lands Funding for Open Solicitation Awards (Timestamp = 02:42:27)**

Water and Climate Coordinator Alexa Schmidt provided an overview of the Natural & Working Lands open solicitation grant offering and outlined staff recommendations for the grant awards. *Action Item.*

Lindsey McClary moved the board award funding to six applications shown in Attachment A, in the amount of \$1,497,476, including five Restoration projects and one Technical Assistance project with an award date of July 23, 2025. Motion seconded by Bruce Buckmaster. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.

**K. Natural and Working Lands Funding for Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program Conservation Management Plan Development and Implementation Awards (Timestamp = 03:24:25)**

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) Coordinator Taylor Larson provided an overview of the Natural & Working Lands OAHP Conservation Management Plan grant offering and presented staff recommendations for the grant awards. *Action Item.*

Mark Labhart moved the board approve the funding recommendation of the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission and award funding to five OAHP Conservation Management Plan grant applications, in the amount of \$752,524, as detailed in Attachment A with an award date of July 23, 2025. Motion seconded by Woody Wolfe. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.

**L. Focused Investment Partnerships – Cohort 2 Reports (Timestamp = 04:30:42)**

Senior Policy Coordinator Eric Hartstein and Region Six Program Representative Amy Charette introduced representatives from the John Day Basin Partnership and Baker Sage-grouse Local Implementation Team who updated the board on their FIP initiative progress. *Information Item.*

**M. Co-Chair Election (Timestamp = 05:14:40)**

OWEB Board Co-Chair Barbara Boyer's term as co-chair ends after the July 2025 board meeting. Board members voted to elect a new co-chair for a two-year term beginning with the October 2025 meeting. *Action item.*

Lindsay McClary and Jamie McLeod-Skinner were nominated, willing to serve, and determined eligible. After discussion, the board utilized a straw poll to inform the motion.

Barbara Boyer moved the board elect Lindsay McClary to serve as co-chair for the next two years, beginning with the October 2025 meeting. Motion seconded by Russ Hoeflich. Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich, Mark Labhart, Liza Jane McAlister, Lindsay McClary, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Mark Webb, and Woody Wolfe voted in favor. Motion passed.

**N. Other Business (Timestamp = 05:34:35)**

This item was reserved for other matters that came before the board. *Information Item.*

**The meeting was adjourned at 2:13 p.m. by co-chair Kelly Coates.**





**October 28-29, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting**

## **General Board Business C-2: Approval of Receipt of Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) Funding**

---

This report requests the board approve receipt of up to \$300,000 from the PSMFC for monitoring projects in the Upper Middle Fork John Day River Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) and agency administrative costs.

### **Background**

Since 2008, the Upper Middle Fork John Day River IMW has evaluated the implementation of watershed restoration projects over a large geography and extended period to describe the collective benefits provided to salmon and steelhead populations, habitat, and water quality.

### **Upper Middle Fork John Day River IMW Funding from PSMFC**

In 2008, OWEB began administering PSMFC funding for groups conducting monitoring in the IMW. OWEB was a key convener of the IMW in coordination with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the North Fork John Day Watershed Council, the Malheur National Forest, and other important partners. In 2017, a 10-Year Summary Report was completed. In 2023, OWEB worked with partners to identify eight contributing authors to complete their data analysis, synthesis, and interpretation of monitoring results to develop a summary report. In October 2024, the IMW presented to the Board their key findings from monitoring and lessons learned from the combined restoration and monitoring efforts in the Upper Middle Fork John Day River.

The PSMFC funding will support ongoing fish monitoring by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; stream temperature, streamflow, and macroinvertebrate monitoring by the North Fork John Day Watershed Council, and streamflow monitoring and website support by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs through June 30, 2026.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Board approve receipt of up to \$300,000 from PSMFC; and add \$264,597 to the “Other Legislative/External Partner Allocated” section of the spending plan for grants and delegate authority to the Executive Director to distribute funds through the appropriate agreements.



October 28-29, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

## **General Board Business C-3: Approval of Receipt of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Funding**

---

This report requests that the board approve receipt of \$500,000 in federal funds from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to support Farm Bill program grants in Oregon and agency administrative costs.

### **Background**

Last biennium OWEB entered into a cooperative agreement with NRCS to support implementation of Farm Bill Program projects in Oregon. The original agreement focused on Inflation Reduction Act programs; this modification and additional funding expands to allow for support of all Farm Bill programs in Oregon.

NRCS staff identify program priorities and then OWEB and NRCS work together to solicit proposals and review applications. OWEB staff then manage the grants and report regularly to NRCS. With the receipt of additional funding OWEB will work with NRCS to run another grant cycle in early 2026.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Board approve receipt of \$500,000 from NRCS; and add \$363,722 to the “Other Legislative/External Partner Allocated” section of the spending plan for grants and delegate authority to the Executive Director to distribute funds through the appropriate agreements.



October 28-29, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

## General Board Business C-4: Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program Conservation Easement Grant Extension

---

This report provides the board updates on the progress and timeline extension request for one Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) Conservation Easement Grant awarded in 2023.

### Background

Every OAHP grant is conditioned on the grantee completing required due diligence items to the satisfaction of OWEB and the match-funding partner before the release of funds for the conservation easement transaction. Consistent with past practice across OWEB transaction programs, staff is presenting a recommendation to the board for approval before granting the grantee's extension request.

Seely Farm Phase 1 was awarded in 2023. Per the administrative rules in effect at that time, the grantee was required to complete their transactions within 18 months of their board award. At the June 2024 Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (OAHC) meeting, staff presented the commission with a recommendation to extend all 2023 OAHP conservation easement grant awards by 9 months to help with coordinated review and timelines with federal match partners. The commission agreed and forwarded it on to the OWEB Board, which approved the commission's recommendation. This action extended the date for closing to July 28, 2025. The grantee, Oregon Agricultural Trust (OAT), requested an additional closing extension in May 2025 to October 2025, which the OAHC recommended approval of at its June 2025 meeting and the OWEB board approved at its July 2025 meeting. Shortly after the approved extension, the grantee requested an additional extension for the reasons identified below. In hindsight, OAT acknowledged that it should have been more prudent with the previous extension request, given the uncertainty of timelines due to limited contractor availability and partner capacity.

### OAHP Conservation Easement Grant Extension Requests

**Seely Farm Phase 1 (Grant No. 223-7100-22521)** was awarded to OAT to be used for the purchase of a working lands conservation easement on approximately 385 acres of high-value farmland in Columbia County. OAT requests that OWEB extend its closing deadline, anticipating that additional time will be needed to coordinate and accommodate OWEB and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) approval timelines with OWEB's approval requirements on due diligence items. OAT requests the OWEB funds in Grant No. 223-7100-22521 be extended to June 30, 2026.

The due diligence steps required by OWEB and NRCS are still in progress or have been completed but not yet submitted for review. The initial appraisal submitted to OWEB for review was withdrawn by OAT due to questions identified in the report's analysis after the original submission and additional follow up needed. OAT identified the lack of appraisers with the necessary credentials and experience with conservation easements on working lands as a significant challenge not only for this project but more broadly, and one that the conservation community in Oregon has been working to address. A second appraisal has been commissioned and is in progress. The conservation easement draft is in legal review and its submission to OWEB has also been delayed in part due to availability of legal and technical review by OAT's legal support. The remainder of the required due diligence items for the grant remain in progress with the grantee.

OAT noted that the due-diligence process for the Seely grants with OWEB and NRCS has helped them identify pinch-points that may impact the timing of other projects. They have developed a conservation easement template that is more tailored to OAHP and NRCS requirements, which will enable earlier and more direct landowner conversations. They have also built relationships with two appraisers that can assist with working lands conservation easement appraisals on the west side of the state. This can help alleviate the stress on timelines that delayed appraisals can produce.

Finally, uncertainty remains with the status of NRCS review timelines. The NRCS Easements Acquisition Branch (national staff) are down by approximately 50% since the beginning of 2025 and document review for closing may now require more time than had been customary. The real estate specialist now assigned to this project currently has 70 NRCS Agricultural Land Easement projects to review.

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission reviewed this extension request on October 8, 2025, and recommends that the OWEB board approve this request from OAT for the Seely project.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommend the OWEB Board extend the closing deadline for Seely Farm Phase 1 (Grant No. 223-7100-22521) to June 30, 2026.



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item E

**Conservation Reserve  
Enhancement Program  
Technical Assistance**

**Grant Offering Board Awards**

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360  
Salem OR 97301-1290  
[www.oregon.gov/oweb](http://www.oregon.gov/oweb)  
(503) 986-0178

*Agenda Item E supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority #3: Use our funding to strengthen and leverage capacity of people and organizations to achieve healthy watersheds.*

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
**FROM:** Heidi Hartman, Federal Programs Specialist  
Courtney Shaff, Monitoring & Reporting Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item E – CREP Technical Assistance grant awards  
October 28-29, 2025, Board Meeting

### I. Introduction

This staff report provides an overview of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Technical Assistance (TA) grant offering for the 2025-27 biennium and summarizes the grant solicitation, grant review process, and the technical review team's funding recommendation for the Board's consideration. Additionally, the report requests approval of receipt of \$200,000 in federal funds from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for CREP TA grants and agency administrative costs.

### II. Background

The Oregon riparian CREP is a voluntary program for agricultural producers on private lands. This state and federal partnership allows producers to receive incentive payments from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency for establishing long-term, riparian buffers on eligible land. An additional state-federal CREP partnership is focused on groundwater resource restoration in Harney County.

The Oregon CREP programs are a cooperative venture between the State of Oregon and Farm Service Agency, with technical support from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and local partners that has been in place since 2011. OWEB provides competitive, statewide CREP TA grants to support costs associated with local CREP program implementation. Generally, these grants have helped local partners hire or contract with technicians who help landowners design the riparian restoration projects. NRCS provides some additional financial resources to OWEB to support the TA grants and training for CREP Technicians.

In July, the Board adopted the 2025-2027 Grant Funds Spending Plan that included a line item for CREP TA of \$1.6 million. This amount was noted as being inclusive of any NRCS CREP TA funds that are awarded to OWEB. NRCS has since awarded OWEB \$200,000 for CREP TA projects (\$162,532) as well as agency administrative costs (\$37,468). The Board

has been asked to approve receipt of the \$200,000 in federal funds though no change is necessary in the spending plan amount of \$1.6 million.

### **III. Summary of Solicitation and Review Process**

Staff opened the CREP TA grant solicitation cycle on June 3, 2025, with a closing date of July 17, 2025. OWEB hosted a webinar for prospective applicants on June 17, 2025. OWEB staff was available to consult with prospective applicants on eligibility, application, and program requirements, as requested.

#### **Applications Submitted**

Fourteen applications, covering 19 counties, were submitted requesting a total of approximately \$1.8 million. Applications were geographically distributed across much of the state. See map in Attachment A.

#### **Grant Application Review Process**

The grant application review process began with staff reviewing each application for eligibility and completeness. Each of the 14 applications was determined eligible and complete, moving them on to the next phase of the review process.

OWEB welcomed new members to the technical review team from the Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, and NRCS and provided guidance on how to evaluate projects according to OWEB's technical assistance evaluation criteria. The review team reviewed applications from mid-July through late August 2025. On August 28, 2025, staff facilitated a full-day review team meeting, at which staff presented a synthesis of each grant application. The review team members then evaluated and ranked applications based on evaluation criteria. Staff compiled the evaluations and developed the funding line and recommendations to present to the board.

Evaluations can be found in the [Application Evaluation document](#).

### **IV. Recommendation**



Staff recommend the Board approve receipt of \$200,000 from NRCS; move \$29,961 from the Quantifying Outcomes and Outputs line item to the CREP TA line item; and award funding to the 12 applications shown in Attachment B with an award date of October 28, 2025.

### **V. Attachments**

- A. Location Map of CREP Technical Assistance Applications
- B. CREP Technical Assistance Funding Recommendations



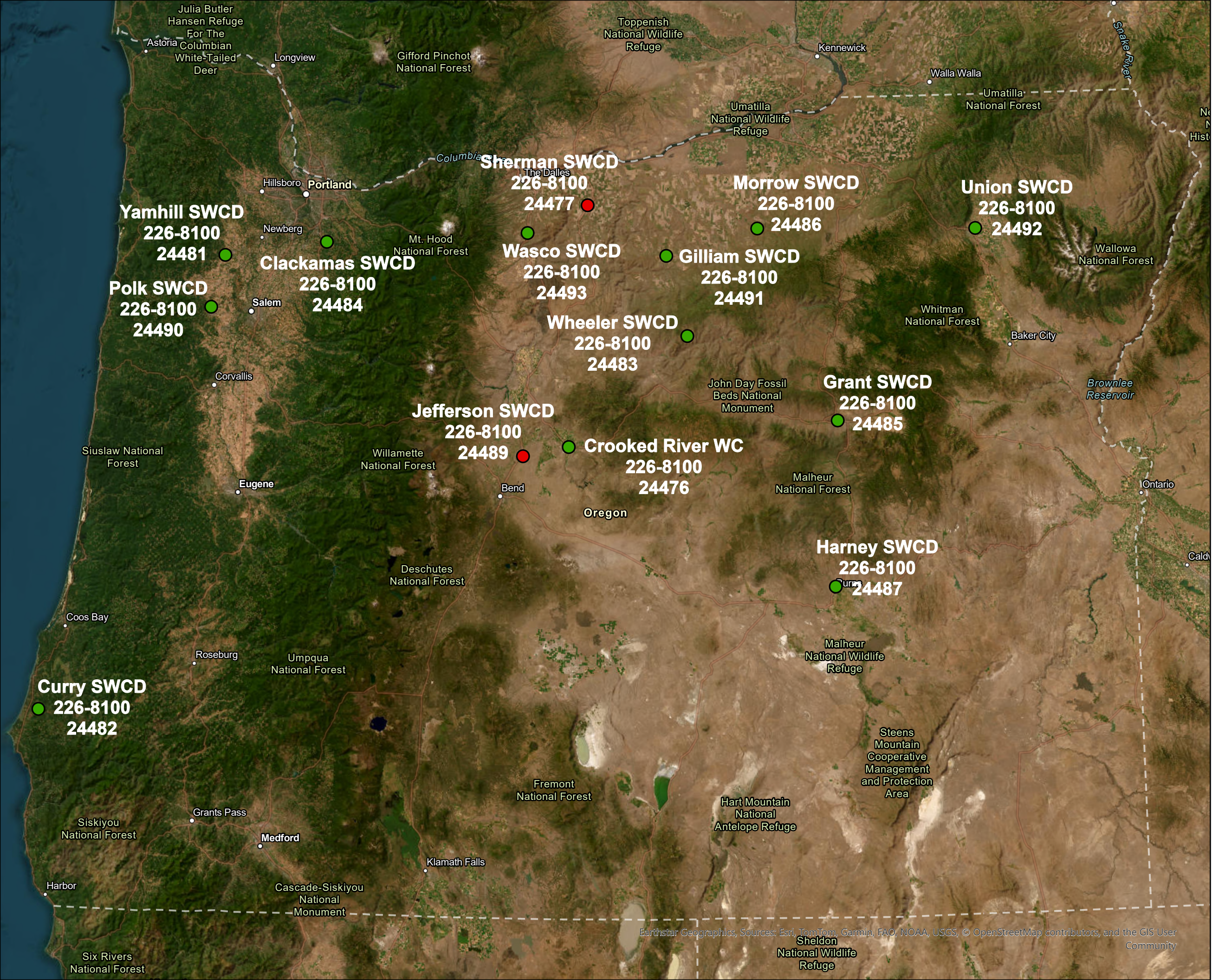
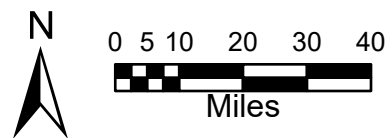
# CREP Technical Assistance Funding Recommendations 2025-27 Biennium

-  Recommended for Funding
-  Not Recommended for Funding



775 Summer St, NE Suite 360  
Salem, OR 97301-1290  
(503) 986-0178  
<https://www.Oregon.gov/OWEB/>

This product is for information purposes, and may not be suitable for legal, engineering or surveying purposes. This information or data is provided with the understanding that conclusions drawn from such information are the responsibility of the user.





### 2025-2027 CREP Technical Assistance Grant Applications

Projects RECOMMENDED for Funding in Priority Order				
Project Number	Region	Applicant	Project Title	Amount Recommended
226-8100-24482	2	Curry SWCD	Coos-Curry CREP TA 2026-2027	\$195,253
226-8100-24491	6	Gilliam SWCD	Gilliam County CREP Technical Assistance 2026-2027	\$140,306
226-8100-24481	3	Yamhill SWCD	Yamhill and Marion CREP TA Partnership	\$297,673
226-8100-24492	5	Union SWCD	Union SWCD Riparian Restoration CREP Technician 2026	\$91,343
226-8100-24493	4	Wasco SWCD	Wasco County SWCD CREP Technical Assistance 2026-27	\$124,787
226-8100-24490	3	Polk SWCD	Polk County CREP TA 25-27	\$113,383
226-8100-24485	6	Grant SWCD	2026-2027 Grant County CREP Technical Assistance	\$157,535
226-8100-24484	3	Clackamas SWCD	CSWCD CREP TA 2026-2027	\$163,411
226-8100-24487	5	Harney SWCD	Harney Basin CREP Assistance	\$110,016
226-8100-24476	4	Crooked River WC	Crooked River Watershed CREP TA	\$108,641
226-8100-24483	6	Wheeler SWCD	Wheeler SWCD CREP TA	\$85,758
226-8100-24486	6	Morrow SWCD	Morrow County CREP Technical Assistance	\$41,855
<b>Total Recommended for Funding by TRT &amp; Staff</b>				<b>\$1,629,961</b>
Projects NOT RECOMMENDED for Funding by TRT				
Project Number	Region	Applicant	Project Title	Amount Requested
226-8100-24489	4	Jefferson SWCD	JCSWCD CREP TA 2026-2027	\$155,694
226-8100-24477	6	Sherman SWCD	Sherman County CREP TA Grant	\$16,631



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item F

**Focused Investment**

**Partnership**

**Cohort 2 Report**

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360  
Salem OR 97301-1290  
[www.oregon.gov/oweb](http://www.oregon.gov/oweb)  
(503) 986-0178

*Agenda Item F supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority # 3: Use our funding to strengthen and leverage capacity of people and organizations to achieve healthy watersheds.*

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
**FROM:** Denise Hoffert, Partnerships Coordinator  
**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item F – Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) Cohort 2 Reporting  
October 28-29, 2025, Board Meeting

### I. Introduction

At the October board meeting, representatives from the Clackamas Basin Partnership will update the board on progress with their FIP initiative.

### II. Background

In January 2019, the board selected five partnerships for FIP funding beginning in the 2019-2021 biennium. These partnerships comprise OWEB's second cohort of FIP initiatives and include the Clackamas Basin Partnership. The first Progress Tracking Reports (PTRs) from the second FIP cohort were provided to the board at the March 2021 meeting, with the second PTR and a supporting presentation by partners in January 2023. The third PTR for the second cohort of FIP partnerships was provided to the board in January 2025.

The second cohort of FIP partnerships are now on the verge of completing their initiatives. Presentations were provided by two partnerships at the July 2025 board meeting, one will be presenting to the board in October 2025, and the remaining two partnerships will present at future meetings.

### III. October Board Meeting Presentations

In 2019, the board selected the Clackamas Basin Partnership for a \$12 million FIP initiative to protect and restore anadromous fish habitat in priority watersheds within the basin. At the October meeting, representatives from the partnership will present progress to the board on their FIP initiative.

The most recent progress tracking report can be found on OWEB's website: [2024-FIP-Clackamas.pdf](#).

### IV. Recommendation

This is an information item only.



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item G

## **OWEB Monitoring Grants 101**

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360  
Salem OR 97301-1290  
[www.oregon.gov/oweb](http://www.oregon.gov/oweb)  
(503) 986-0178

*Agenda Item G supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority #4: Advance learning about watershed protection and restoration effectiveness through coordinated monitoring.*

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
**FROM:** Courtney Shaff, Monitoring & Reporting Manager  
Ken Fetcho, Effectiveness Monitoring Coordinator  
Audrey Hatch, Conservation Outcomes Coordinator  
**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item G – Monitoring 101  
[October 28-29, 2025, Board Meeting](#)

### I. Introduction

At the October board meeting, Courtney Shaff, Monitoring & Reporting Manager and Ken Fetcho, Effectiveness Monitoring Coordinator will provide an overview of OWEB's monitoring grant types.

### II. Background

OWEB's monitoring grants assist the agency in meeting its responsibility to: 1) provide support for cooperative monitoring activities, 2) describe the results of restoration investments, and 3) report on progress of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds. The 2025-2027 board-adopted spending plan breaks funding down into categories that align with OWEB's grant programs. Funding for monitoring grants in the spending plan includes Open Solicitation, Quantifying Conservation Outputs and Outcomes, and Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) Effectiveness Monitoring, which equals \$6.1 million and 4.65% of the grant funds in the spending plan. Monitoring grants are also funded in the individual FIP awards and that is incorporated into the FIP line items of the spending plan. In addition, monitoring activities are funded in Strategic Implementation Area grants, which are included in the Engagement section of the spending plan.

This presentation will focus on monitoring investments that are included in the Monitoring section of the spending plan and how that information is applied to inform future eligible acquisition and restoration activities.

### III. Recommendation

This is an information item only.



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item I

## **Water Acquisitions Panel**

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360  
Salem OR 97301-1290  
[www.oregon.gov/oweb](http://www.oregon.gov/oweb)  
(503) 986-0178

*Agenda Item I supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority #6: Take bold and innovative action toward funding projects that advance climate resilience.*

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
**FROM:** Renee Davis, Acquisitions & Special Programs Manager  
Brian Wolcott, Water Acquisitions & Capacity Coordinator  
**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item I – Water Acquisition Panel  
October 28-29, 2025, Board Meeting

### I. Introduction

Stream flow restoration is widely recognized as a priority need in Oregon to maintain and restore salmon and other fish and wildlife. The OWEB Water Acquisition grant program supports this need and implements a key component of Oregon Revised Statute 541.956 by “Acquiring from willing owners interests in land or water that will protect or restore native fish or wildlife habitats.” This staff report provides brief background about the program and an introduction to the Water Acquisition panel discussion that will occur at the October 2025 board meeting.

### II. Background

During the 2022 Legislative session, targeted funding was appropriated for water acquisition grants and grant administration as part of a drought resilience package. Conservation organizations requested the package because of the connection with voluntary stream flow restoration and fish and wildlife population resiliency. Following this investment, a separate line item, “Water Acquisitions,” was added to the board’s spending plan; this line item is supported by the 2022 allocation. A separate long-standing “Land and Water Acquisition” line item, supported by Lottery funds, is also included in the spending plan. Due to the fund source (i.e., Other Funds) and legislative intent of the 2022 allocation, OWEB is prioritizing spending of the “Water Acquisitions” line item for water acquisition grant awards.

Since the new investment in 2022, OWEB has offered three solicitations for water acquisition grant applications, with the most recent board awards in April 2025. The Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) for the water acquisition grant program was last updated in 2020, thus triggering the 5-year rule review requirement.

### **III. Recent Discussions and the October Water Acquisition Panel**

The board's discussion and deliberation at the April 2025 board meeting prompted brainstorming among OWEB staff about approaches for providing key information to the board following the technical review process. In addition, staff received feedback from local partner organizations, reviewers, and entities that were involved in the 2022 legislative discussions about the drought resilience investments.

At the July board meeting, staff described brainstormed ideas and shared feedback received, then invited thoughts from the board for improvements before future grant award deliberations. One idea was an off-grant-cycle panel discussion with project developers and technical experts about considerations that inform scoping, developing, valuing/appraising, and implementing water acquisition projects.

During the October meeting, the board will hear from a water acquisition panel to learn more about these considerations and then engage in dialogue with the panel. Anticipated panel members include: Anton Chiono, Habitat Conservation Project Leader, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Department of Natural Resources; Kate Fitzpatrick, Executive Director, Deschutes River Conservancy; Femke Freiberg, Western Water Program Director, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Jessica Humphreys, Oregon Flow Restoration Director, Trout Unlimited; Chris Kowitz, North Central Region Manager, Oregon Water Resources Department; and Spencer Sawaske, Habitat Division Deputy Administrator, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

### **IV. Recommendation**

This is an information item only.





OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item J

## **Committee Updates**

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025



## **Committee Members**

Liz Agpaoa, Barbara Boyer, Aaron Curtis, Lindsay McClary (co-chair), and Woody Wolfe (co-chair)

## **Meeting Summary**

The Partnerships and Capacity Committee met on September 2, 2025 [[Meeting Recording](#)].

The committee heard a staff presentation on the Conservation Reserve and Enhancement Program (CREP) Technical Assistance grant program and reviewed and discussed the draft Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) Ecological Priorities. There was no public comment.

### **CREP Technical Assistance Grant Program**

Courtney Shaff, Monitoring and Reporting Manager and Heidi Hartman, Federal Programs Specialist provided a presentation to the committee explaining background on the CREP program in Oregon and the role that OWEB technical assistance grants provide. Following this background, staff gave the committee a preview of the 2025-2027 CREP Technical Assistance grant program. The 2025-2027 board spending plan includes \$1.6 million for CREP Technical Assistance, and 14 grant applications were submitted, requesting \$1.8 million. At the time of the committee meeting, evaluations were being drafted in advance of the October meeting, where the board will award CREP Technical Assistance grants (see Agenda Item E).

### **FIP Ecological Priorities**

Eric Williams, Restoration Grants Manager, Eric Hartstein, Senior Policy Coordinator, Denise Hoffert, Partnerships Coordinator, and Jillian McCarthy, Partnerships Coordinator presented the draft revisions to the FIP ecological priorities and requested committee direction on potential refinements before presenting the draft ecological priorities to the board at the October 28-29 meeting (see Agenda Item K). Following the October board meeting, it is expected that further refinements will be made to the draft ecological priorities by staff and the committee, and at the January 27-28 meeting, the board will consider approving final FIP ecological priorities.

### **Upcoming Agenda Items**

In addition to any additional revisions to the FIP ecological priorities, and previewing the next FIP grant offering, the December committee meeting will include a discussion on outreach and engagement on potential rulemaking associated with OWEB capacity grants.

## **To Be Presented at the Board Meeting By**

Lindsay McClary and Woody Wolfe



## Committee Members

Dan Brown (co-chair), Bruce Buckmaster, Kelly Coates, Russ Hoeflich (co-chair), and Mark Webb

## Meeting Summary

The Acquisitions, Restoration, and Emerging Topics (ARE) committee met on September 4, 2025 [[Meeting Recording](#)].

The committee: 1) heard an update about the Land Acquisition modernization workstreams; 2) received overviews of staff-developed documents including a matrix of risk categories and a summary memo about conservation easements; 3) received a presentation from and engaged in dialogue with a grantee and partner panel that provided feedback about conservation easements; and 4) touched briefly on upcoming topics for future ARE committee meetings. In addition to written public comment, verbal public comment was provided by Joe Buttafuoco and Karsyn Kendrick of the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT).

### **M76 Land Acquisition Grant Program Modernization**

Sara O'Brien, Executive Director, and Renee Davis, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager, reviewed the impetus behind the M76 modernization process and provided an update about the workstreams—including the Tribal workstream and initial streamlining for the 2025 land acquisition grant cycle—within this process. Staff reviewed feedback received thus far during the modernization process and focused on the following topic for this meeting: use of conservation easements by OWEB to meet the statutory requirement for a title restriction. Committee members encouraged staff to begin merging the Tribal workstream into ARE committee discussions as possible, while recognizing the sovereignty of Tribes.

### **Review of Risk Matrix and Conservation Easement Memo**

Renee Davis walked the committee through a risk matrix that was created as follow-up from the June committee discussion. This matrix includes multiple categories of risk: fiduciary, operational, strategic/policy, and environmental and ecological. For each of these risk categories, examples of potential risk across a spectrum from lower to higher risk are provided. As discussed by the committee in June, multiple types of risk exist, and each type can present a range of possible risk levels. The document provides more detail about types and degree of risk, as requested by the committee in June.

Staff then reviewed the conservation easement memo. The memo summarizes background about Constitutional, statutory, administrative rule, and program-level requirements and guidance for the land acquisition program. It then provides an overview of conservation easements generally, including authorization in Oregon statute and roles and a description of what conservation easements are and how they function to protect conservation values. The memo describes the statutory requirement for OWEB to hold a title restriction on lands purchased with OWEB funds and why, historically, the agency has utilized conservation easements to meet this statutory requirement. It then delves into more specifics about how the agency has used and implemented conservation easements in practice, including content required by the agency in easement documents.

### **Grantee and Partner Panel about Conservation Easements**

Joe Buttafuoco, Executive Director of COLT, facilitated presentation by the following panelists:

- Melissa Kalvestrand, Executive Director, Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Accreditation Commission;
- Amanda “Marti” Martino, Executive Director, Blue Mountain Land Trust;
- Claire Fox, Conservation Director, Greenbelt Land Trust;
- Nate Ulrich, Conservation Director, Columbia Land Trust; and
- Natasha Bellis, Conservation Director, Deschutes Land Trust.

The panel offered a rich discussion that included case studies and a diversity of opinions and important feedback from local partners. Melissa Kalvestrand provided an overview of the LTA accreditation process that land trusts and other organizations complete. Marti Martino, Claire Fox, and Nate Ulrich shared their perspectives about categories and thresholds of risk relevant to land acquisition projects, OWEB’s use of conservation easements, and how the agency’s land acquisition program has worked in practice for their land trusts based on specific example projects. Natasha Bellis provided feedback about risk tolerance and considerations about flexibility as the OWEB board is modernizing the land acquisition grant program. The committee asked questions of and engaged in discussion with the panelists.

#### **Plans for Future ARE Meetings**

Committee members expressed interest in having the opportunity to further digest the depth and breadth of information presented at the meeting, ask questions of staff, and discuss among the committee topics such as potential alternative title restrictions. (A staff-developed document about potential title restriction instruments was created for the September committee meeting, but time was not available to review this.) Staff noted that some topics mentioned during the grantee/partner panel likely would come up at the December ARE committee meeting, which will focused on significant habitat and future habitat conditions requirements.

#### **To Be Presented at the Board Meeting By:**

Dan Brown and Russ Hoeflich



October 28-29, 2025, OWEB Board Meeting

## Tracking and Communicating Results, Mission, and Values Committee Update

---

### Committee Members

Mark Labhart, Brian Staab, Liza Jane McAlister, Jamie McLeod-Skinner, Claire Tachella (co-chair), and Jessi Kershner (co-chair)

### Meeting Summary

Tracking and Communicating Results, Mission, and Values committee met on September 10, 2025 [[Meeting Recording](#)].

Courtney Shaff, Monitoring and Reporting Manager, Audrey Hatch, Conservation Outcomes Coordinator, Stephanie Page, Deputy Director, and Linda Repplinger, Publications Specialist provided the committee a Reporting and Communication 101 presentation. The committee discussed OWEB's reporting tools and how they support and interact with OWEB's communication approaches. The committee was interested in how OWEB shares reports and other communication materials with both board members and local partners. There was no public comment.

### Upcoming Committee Agenda Items

At the next committee meeting OWEB staff will provide an overview of OWEB's Focused Investment Partnership reporting.

### To Be Presented at the Board Meeting By:

Jessi Kershner





OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item K

**Focused Investment**

**Partnership**

**Ecological Priorities**

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360  
Salem OR 97301-1290  
[www.oregon.gov/oweb](http://www.oregon.gov/oweb)  
(503) 986-0178

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

**FROM:** Eric Williams, Restoration Grants Manager  
Jillian McCarthy, Partnerships Coordinator  
Denise Hoffert, Partnerships Coordinator  
Eric Hartstein, Senior Policy Coordinator

**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item K - Focused Investment Partnership Draft Ecological Priorities & Next Grant Solicitation

October 28-29, 2025, Board Meeting

### I. Background

The Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) grant program provides multiple years of funding for high performing partnerships to implement landscape-scale restoration and conservation that addresses Board-identified ecological priorities of significance to the State. Oregon Administrative Rule 695-047-0030 requires the Board to approve these ecological priorities at least every five years, and that the priorities be determined with public input, scientific rigor, and include a map, theory of change (expected short and long term outcomes), and narrative describing the desired ecological outcomes for eligible FIP initiative activities. In 2020 the Board approved, with modest revisions, the following ecological priorities that were first designated by the Board in 2015:

- Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species
- Closed Lakes Basin Wetland Habitat
- Coastal Estuaries
- Coho Habitat and Populations along the Coast
- Dry-Type Forest Habitat
- Oak Woodland and Prairie Habitat
- Sagebrush/Sage-Steppe Habitat

In 2025, the Board is considering revised and/or new ecological priorities for the FIP program. OWEB staff have been working with the board Partnerships and Capacity Committee to develop draft ecological priority revisions.

### II. Draft Ecological Priorities

Earlier this year OWEB staff began the FIP ecological priority update process by engaging the public and tribes with a survey, listening sessions, and written comments. Additionally, staff reached out to state and federal natural resource agencies for input to inform potential revisions to the ecological priorities. Broadly, these engagement efforts pointed

towards updating the existing ecological priorities with new information, and in some cases, new maps. The draft ecological priority with the most substantive revisions is the “Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish,” which has merged with “Coho Habitat and Populations along the Coast” and expanded to include habitat for other certain aquatic species. Attachment A provides a summary of the draft revisions to the ecological priorities, and Attachment B includes the draft revisions to each of the ecological priority memos.

To view the existing priority memos that were adopted by the OWEB Board in 2020, please see the [FIP webpage](#).

### **III. Board Feedback on Ecological Priorities and Next Steps for the FIP Program**

At the October meeting, staff will present the draft revisions to the FIP ecological priorities and request board feedback. Following the October Board meeting, it is expected that any further refinements will be made to the draft ecological priorities by staff and the Partnerships and Capacity Committee, and at the January 27-28 meeting, the Board will consider approving final FIP ecological priorities.

Following the January board meeting, OWEB is expecting to announce the solicitation for new FIP initiatives to begin in the 2027-2029 biennium. Prior to the solicitation, OAR 695-047-0090 requires the Board to determine the maximum amount for FIP initiative biennial awards. Previously, the maximum amount a FIP initiative could request per biennium was \$4 million. In January 2025, the Board approved revised FIP program rules that eliminated this static cap in order to provide flexibility and account for inflation. At the October board meeting, staff will provide information to assist the Board in an initial discussion in determining the maximum amount of funding per biennium partnerships may request in the upcoming solicitation. A final recommendation will be made presented to the Board for consideration in January.

### **IV. Recommendation**

This is an information item only.

### **V. Attachments**

- A. Summary of Revisions to FIP Ecological Priorities
- B. Draft Revised FIP Ecological Priorities Memos

## FIP Ecological Priorities- Draft Revisions Summary

### **Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species**

- Change name to 'Aquatic Habitat for Native Species'.
- Broaden the priority to include coast coho salmon habitat and habitat for other aquatic species (i.e., Oregon spotted frog, western pond turtle, and western ridged mussel).
- Revisions to the map for native fish, which now incorporates coast coho salmon habitat and a reprioritization of the watersheds that support native fish habitat. The draft revised map includes only the highest priority watersheds with lower priority watersheds removed.

### **Closed Lakes Basin Wetland Habitat**

- General updates, including linkages to Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan and other reference plans.
- Substantial edits to 'Indicator species and/or species of interest supported by this habitat'.

### **Coastal Estuaries**

- Change name to 'Estuary Habitats.'
- General updates, including linkages to Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan and other reference plans.

### **Coho Habitat and Populations along the Coast**

- Removing this ecological priority and incorporating coast coho salmon into the revised 'Aquatic Habitat for Native Species'.

### **Dry-Type Forest Habitat**

- General updates, including linkages to Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan and other reference plans.
- Substantial updates to 'Key limiting factors and/or ecological threats' section.
- Updates to the map demonstrating percent of watershed needing disturbance restoration.

### **Oak Woodland and Prairie Habitat**

- Change name to 'Oak and Prairie Habitat.'
- General updates, including linkages to Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan and other reference plans.

- Removing reference to supporting aquatic ecosystems, as making this connection is not necessary for oak and prairie habitat.

### **Sagebrush/Sage-Steppe Habitat**

- In addition to sage-grouse habitat, add existing high-quality sagebrush, and sagebrush growth opportunity areas, as focal areas of the priority.
- General updates, including linkages to Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan and other reference plans.

### **Supplemental Information to All Ecological Priorities**

- Add landscape-scale disturbance as a key limiting factor and/or threat across the priorities, noting that post-disturbance restoration actions may be eligible for FIP funding.
- Add wildlife habitat connectivity as a key limiting factor and/or threat across the priorities, linking to the ODFW Priority Wildlife Conservation Areas to show where habitat connectivity is most important, and noting that actions related to connectivity are eligible within FIP initiatives.





## **OWEB Focused Investment Partnership Priority**

### **AQUATIC HABITAT FOR NATIVE SPECIES - 2025 Draft Revisions**

#### **Summary Statement of Priority**

The OWEB Board will consider proposals for investment in aquatic habitat for native species for Initiatives that address habitat conservation and restoration needs to achieve ecological outcomes over time at the landscape scale.

OWEB's Focused Investment Priority for Aquatic Habitat for Native Species guides voluntary actions that address limiting factors related to the quality of this habitat type. These actions also support and/or improve watershed functions and processes. Action will be guided by the habitats, limiting factors, ecological outcomes, and conservation approaches outlined in associated federal recovery plans, state conservation plans, Oregon's State Wildlife Action Plan, tribal plans, and other plans listed at the end of this document.

#### **Background**

##### **Where it occurs**

As defined here, aquatic habitats include rivers, streams, estuaries, wetlands, floodplains, lakes, tidally influenced waters, and associated riparian habitats. These areas occur across the state and provide essential habitat to many at-risk species.

**The Aquatic Habitat for Native Species** priority map includes priority habitat for aquatic species of conservation concern. Priority species for this FIP include those that are federally listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), including ESA-listed fish, Oregon Spotted Frog, and Northwestern Pond Turtle. In addition, it includes associated habitat for other species that have been identified as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in Oregon's State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) such as Pacific Lamprey and Western Ridged Mussel.

##### **Indicator species and/or species of interest supported by these habitats**

Several native fish and wildlife species have been listed or are candidates for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) or have been identified as threatened, endangered, or sensitive by the state of Oregon. These species include, but are not limited to: anadromous salmon, listed trout, several species of sucker, lamprey, chub, Oregon spotted frog, northwestern pond turtle, and Western ridged mussel.

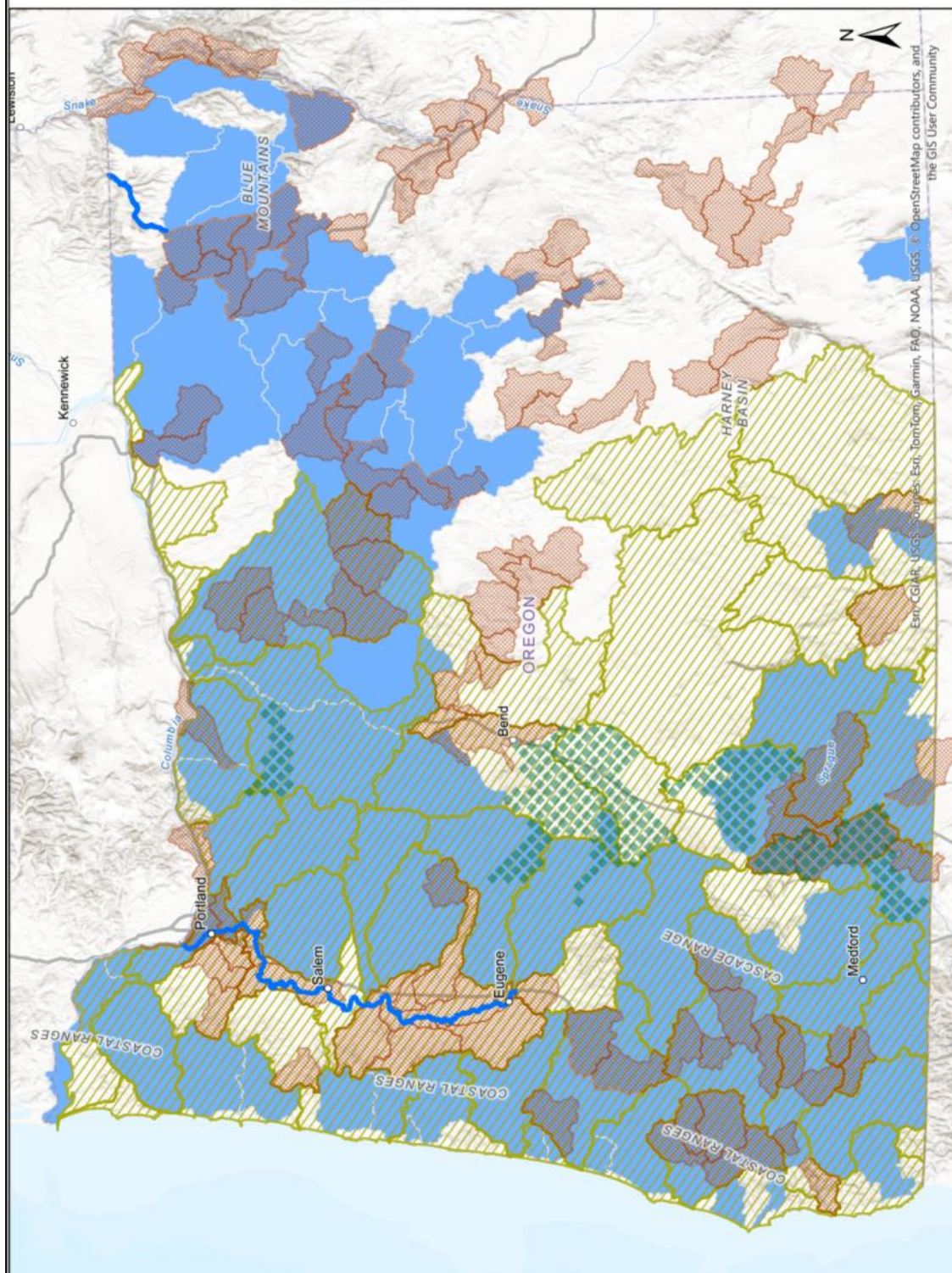
Pacific lamprey and other native lamprey species are also included in this Priority, and there are no geographic limits for proposed conservation actions targeting lamprey. Proposed FIP initiatives that include lamprey as a focal species will be assessed independently of the associated Aquatic Habitat for Native Species map.

# Focused Investment Priority for Aquatic Habitat for Native Species

- Native Fish
- Oregon spotted frog
- Western ridged mussel
- Northwest Pond Turtle
- Mainstem Rivers for Native Fish



0 5 10 20 30 40  
Miles



Map data: Esri, DeLorme, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

### **Why it is significant to the state**

Aquatic habitats support an incredible number of Oregon's native fish and wildlife species. The extent of biodiversity in an aquatic habitat is a reflection of the native fish and wildlife, plants, and other aquatic species present there. High-quality aquatic systems provide essential habitat to many at-risk species, including important spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids and other native fishes and Species of Greatest Conservation need, such as Oregon Spotted Frog, Western Pond Turtle, and Western Ridged Mussels.

Sustaining aquatic biodiversity is essential to the health of our environment and to the quality of human life. Healthy aquatic ecosystems are imperative for to Oregon's communities and economy, including fisheries and recreation. Many of the species that are a focus of this Priority provide substantial ecological, economic, and cultural benefits to Oregon tribes. A warming climate presents challenges to aquatic habitat in Oregon, and restoring and protecting these habitats helps build durable adaptation and resilience for these ecosystems.

### **Key limiting factors and/or threats, with a focus on ecosystem function and process**

- Degraded and impaired water quality (e.g., temperature and sedimentation, dissolved oxygen, temperature, bacteria load), including those factors associated with the loss of riparian and floodplain vegetation;
- Reduced and insufficient water quantity/flows during critical flow periods (e.g., low streamflow and altered hydrology due to water diversions, dam operations, and loss of beaver);
- Loss of habitat complexity (e.g., high-quality instream structure and spawning gravel, floodplain connectivity, connected off-channel habitat, presence of pools, and presence of large wood);
- Impaired ecosystem functions that have resulted in decreased quantity and quality of instream complexity and degraded rearing and spawning habitats;
- Degraded riparian areas;
- Loss of habitat connectivity, including: floodplain connectivity; access to cold-water refugia; and fish-passage barriers that are identified as primary limiting factors for native fish species and as noted by ODFW's statewide fish passage priority list;
- Spread of invasive plant and animal species (e.g., reed canary grass, bullfrogs);
- Climate change which may exacerbate drought and water temperature stress;
- Disease: emerging pathogens such as chytrid fungus (*Bd*);
- Habitat loss from development and impacts from grazing;
- Landscape-scale disturbance, including wildfire, landslides, flooding or similar events may occur within the FIP geography. Post-disturbance restoration actions addressing landscape-scale disturbance may be eligible FIP actions; and
- Loss of wildlife habitat connectivity. Many species rely on the ability to move throughout the landscape to fulfill their daily and seasonal needs for access to food, shelter, and opportunities to reproduce. ODFW produced [Priority Wildlife Conservation Areas \(PWCAs\) maps](#) to show where habitat connectivity is most important. Fifty-four species were selected for the project as surrogates, representing a variety of taxa, movement types, dispersal capabilities, and sensitivity to anthropogenic threats. FIP Initiatives may include actions enhancing PWCAs within the geographic boundary of their FIP Initiative.

## Reference plans

1. Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan: (<https://dfw.state.or.us/SWAP-Revision/>)
2. Species-specific conservation and recovery plans:
  - Table 1. Conservation and Recovery Plans for Native Fish Species
  - Table 2. Conservation and Recovery Plans for Oregon Spotted Frog
  - Table 3. Conservation and Recovery Plans for Western Pond Turtle
  - Table 4. Reference Plans for Western Ridged Mussels

Oregon Tribes may also have native fish species plans guiding conservation efforts that can be referenced in developing FIP initiatives under this Priority. All of the plans noted here focus on maintaining sustainable native fish and wildlife populations that contribute to their ecosystems and provide a variety of recreational, commercial, cultural, and aesthetic benefits.

These plans identify key limiting factors for specific fish and wildlife species, geographies in which habitat for these species occur, and priority actions that will address limiting factors. While these plans have a species focus, addressing the limiting factors and meeting the goals of each plan supports native fish and wildlife communities and the ecosystem function of aquatic habitats more generally. Thus, achieving the desired habitat and population objectives within these plans will provide significant ecological, economic and cultural benefits for all Oregonians.



**Table 1. Conservation and Recovery Plans for Native Fish Species**

USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

NMFS = NOAA Fisheries

ODFW = Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

<b>Conservation and Recovery Plans</b>	<b>Native Fish Species</b>	<b>Associated Basin(s)</b>
USFWS Recovery Plan for the Threatened and Rare Native Fishes of the Warner Basin and Alkali Sub-basin (1998)	Warner Sucker, Hutton Tui Chub, Foskett Speckled Dace	Closed Lakes
USFWS Recovery Plan for the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (1995)	Lahontan Cutthroat Trout	Closed Lakes
USFWS Recovery Plan for the Coterminous United States Population of Bull Trout (2015)	Bull Trout	Deschutes, John Day, Upper Klamath, Lower Columbia, Willamette, Grande Ronde
USFWS Revised Recovery Plan for the Lost River Sucker and Shortnose Sucker (2013)	Lost River Sucker, Shortnose Sucker	Upper Klamath
<a href="#">ODFW Coastal, Columbia, and Snake Conservation Plan for Lampreys in Oregon (2020)</a>	Pacific Lamprey, Western River Lamprey, Western Brook Lamprey, Pacific Brook Lamprey	
<a href="#">NMFS/ODFW Conservation &amp; Recovery Plan for Oregon Steelhead Populations in the Middle Columbia River Steelhead DPS (2010)</a>	Steelhead	Deschutes, John Day, Umatilla, Walla Walla
NMFS ESA Recovery Plan for Northeast Oregon Snake River Spring and Summer Chinook Salmon and Snake River Steelhead Populations (2017)	Spring Chinook Salmon, Steelhead	Grande Ronde, Imnaha
<a href="#">NMFS/ODFW Lower Columbia River Conservation and Recovery Plan for Oregon Populations of Salmon and Steelhead (2010)</a>	Spring and Fall Chinook Salmon, Chum Salmon, Coho Salmon, Summer and Winter Steelhead	Lower Columbia River
<a href="#">NMFS/ODFW Upper Willamette River Conservation and Recovery Plan for Chinook Salmon and Steelhead (2011)</a>	Spring Chinook Salmon, Winter Steelhead	Willamette
<a href="#">Oregon Coast Coho Conservation Plan for the State of Oregon (2007)</a>	Coho Salmon	Coastal watersheds from the Necanicum River to the Sixes River
NMFS Final ESA Recovery Plan for Oregon Coast Coho Salmon (2016)	Coho Salmon	Coastal watersheds from the Necanicum River to the Sixes River
<a href="#">ODFW Coastal Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan (2014)</a>	Spring and Fall Chinook salmon, Chum Salmon, Summer and Winter Steelhead, Cutthroat Trout	Coastal watersheds from Cape Blanco to the Columbia River (including Umpqua, Tillamook, many others)

NMFS Final Recovery Plan for the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast ESU of Coho Salmon (2014)	Coho Salmon	Rogue, coastal watersheds south of Cape Blanco
<a href="#">ODFW Rogue–South Coast Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan (2021)</a>	Coho Salmon, Summer and Winter Steelhead, Cutthroat Trout	Rogue, coastal watersheds south of Cape Blanco
<a href="#">ODFW Rogue Spring Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan (2007)</a>	Spring Chinook Salmon	Rogue
<a href="#">ODFW Conservation Plan for Fall Chinook Salmon in the Rogue Species Management Unit (2013)</a>	Fall Chinook Salmon	Rogue, coastal watersheds south of Cape Blanco
<a href="#">ODFW Plan for the Reintroduction of Anadromous Fish in the Upper Klamath Basin (2008)</a>	Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, Pacific Lamprey	Upper Klamath
<a href="#">ODFW/The Klamath Tribes Implementation Plan for the Reintroduction of Anadromous Fishes into the Oregon Portion of the Upper Klamath Basin (2021)</a>	Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, Pacific Lamprey	Upper Klamath

**Table 2. Conservation and Recovery Plans for Oregon Spotted Frog**

Reference or Plan	Description	Weblink
USFWS Recovery Plan for the Oregon Spotted Frog (2023) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2023. Draft Recovery Plan for the Oregon Spotted Frog ( <i>Rana pretiosa</i> ). Portland, Oregon. xi + 23 pages	Recovery criteria include achieving moderate or higher resiliency in at least 12 sub-basins, representing all six genetic groups and five ecoregional areas. Recovery actions include restoring hydrology, managing invasive species, improving connectivity, and conducting monitoring and research.	<a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/docs/recovery_plan/Oregon_Spotted_Frog_Draft_RP_SIGNED_2023-02-24.pdf">https://ecos.fws.gov/docs/recovery_plan/Oregon_Spotted_Frog_Draft_RP_SIGNED_2023-02-24.pdf</a>
Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (2020)	Provides complementary conservation measures for Oregon spotted frog habitat in the Upper Deschutes.	

**Table 3. Conservation and Recovery Plans for Northwestern Pond Turtle**

Reference or Plan	Description	Web Link
Western Pond Turtle Range-wide Management Strategy (2020). WPTRCC	Guidance document that provides a shared conservation strategy to ensure persistence of pond turtle species throughout their range.	<a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/docs/recovery_plan/WPT%20RCC%20Strategy%202020.pdf">https://ecos.fws.gov/docs/recovery_plan/WPT%20RCC%20Strategy%202020.pdf</a>
Oregon Conservation Strategy (2016). ODFW	State Wildlife Action Plan for Oregon which identifies priority species, habitats, conservation areas, and key conservation issues facing the state's wildlife. Provides an overview of special needs, limiting factors, data gaps, and recommends conservation actions.	<a href="http://www.oregonconservationstrategy.org">www.oregonconservationstrategy.org</a>
Species Status Assessment Report for Northwestern Pond Turtle ( <i>Actinemys marmorata</i> ) and Southwestern Pond Turtle ( <i>Actinemys pallida</i> ) (2023). USFWS	Provides the best available science on northwestern pond turtle biology, habitat, demography, and threats. Assesses current and future status considering two plausible future scenarios.	<a href="https://iris.fws.gov/APPS/ServCat/DownloadFile/241273">https://iris.fws.gov/APPS/ServCat/DownloadFile/241273</a>
Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Threatened Species Status With Section 4(d) Rule for the Northwestern Pond Turtle and Southwestern Pond Turtle (2023). USFWS	Proposed rule to list northwestern pond turtle as threatened after a positive 12-month finding (without critical habitat designation).	<a href="https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/10/03/2023-21685/endangered-and-threatened-wildlife-and-plants-threatened-species-status-with-section-4d-rule-for-the">https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/10/03/2023-21685/endangered-and-threatened-wildlife-and-plants-threatened-species-status-with-section-4d-rule-for-the</a>
Northwestern Pond Turtle ( <i>Actinemys marmorata</i> ) (2023). INR	Oregon-specific summary of biology, distribution, habitat, movement ecology, diet, status, and threats.	<a href="https://inside.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/docs/SSA/rep_amph/Northwestern%20Pond%20Turtle.pdf">https://inside.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/docs/SSA/rep_amph/Northwestern%20Pond%20Turtle.pdf</a>
Northwestern Pond Turtle Coordinator Project (2021). Samara Group	Final report on 1) habitat restoration at three sites with pre- and post-treatment monitoring, and 2) pond turtle data compilation, analysis, and standardized occupancy surveys.	
Guidance for Conserving Oregon's Native Turtles Including Best Management Practices (2015). ODFW	Recommended management practices to plan projects, mitigate project impacts, create and/or restore habitat, and achieve conservation goals for native turtles.	<a href="https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_with/docs/ODFW_Turtle_BMPs_March_2015.pdf">https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_with/docs/ODFW_Turtle_BMPs_March_2015.pdf</a>
Recommended Best Management Practices for the Western Pond Turtle on Department of Defense Installations (2020). USFWS, DoD-PARC	Guidance developed for DoD to plan, prioritize, conserve, and manage projects to the benefit of pond turtles.	<a href="https://www.denix.osd.mil/dodparc/denix-files/sites/36/2021/01/Pond-Turtles-BMP_Final_508_v2.pdf">https://www.denix.osd.mil/dodparc/denix-files/sites/36/2021/01/Pond-Turtles-BMP_Final_508_v2.pdf</a>



Western Pond Turtle: Biology, Sampling techniques, Inventory and Monitoring, Conservation, and Management (2012). Bruce BR, Welsh Jr. HH, Germano, DJ, Ashton DT	Synthesis of biology, management, and conservation information for pond turtle.	<a href="https://thesnvb.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SNVB_nwf7_WPT-2012_complete-1.pdf">thesnvb.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SNVB_nwf7_WPT-2012_complete-1.pdf</a>
Washington State Recovery Plan for the Western Pond Turtle (1999). Hays DW, McAllister KR, Richardson SA, Stinson DW	Summary of Washington pond turtle distribution, abundance, and factors affecting persistence. Establishes recovery goals and prescribes actions needed to meet recovery.	<a href="https://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/00398">https://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/00398</a>
The Western Pond Turtle: Habitat and History: Final Report (1994). Holland DC	Provides comprehensive natural history information for western pond turtle including status of the Willamette basin population; summaries of reproductive ecology, aquatic movements, overwintering, effects of introduced species, and molecular genetics; and considerations for translocation efforts for mitigation.	<a href="https://osti.gov/servlets/purl/171287">osti.gov/servlets/purl/171287</a>
Conservation of Northwestern and Southwestern Pond Turtles: Threats, Population Size Estimates, and Population Viability Analysis (2021). Manzo SE, Nicholson G, Z. Devereux Z, Fisher RN, Brown CW, Scott PA, and Shaffer HB	Analysis to determine impacts of threats, population sizes, and future population viability assessment under various drought scenarios.	<a href="https://meridian.allenpress.com/jfwm/article/12/2/485/470112/Conservation-of-Northwestern-and-Southwestern-Pond">https://meridian.allenpress.com/jfwm/article/12/2/485/470112/Conservation-of-Northwestern-and-Southwestern-Pond</a>
Effective removal of the American bullfrog ( <i>Lithobates catesbeianus</i> ) on a landscape level: long term monitoring and removal efforts in Yosemite Valley, Yosemite National Park (2020). Kamoroff C, Daniele N, Grasso RL, Rising R, Espinoza T, Goldberg CS.	Case study of successful bullfrog eradication effort to support native wildlife recovery.	<a href="https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10530-019-02116-4">https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10530-019-02116-4</a>
Effects of drought on western pond turtle survival and movement patterns (2017). Purcell KL, McGregor EL, Calderala K	Case study of the impacts of drought on movement, survival, and resiliency of western pond turtle.	<a href="https://research.fs.usda.gov/treearch/54886">https://research.fs.usda.gov/treearch/54886</a>
Drivers of Non-Random Nest-Site Selection in an Oviparous Vertebrate (2019). St. John WA	Case study of nesting ecology and nest-site selection in western pond turtle.	<a href="https://scholarworks.calstatelibrary.org/concern/theses/z890rt90c">https://scholarworks.calstatelibrary.org/concern/theses/z890rt90c</a>

**Table 4. Reference Plans for Western Ridged Mussels**

Reference or Plan	Description	Weblink
Freshwater Mussels of the Pacific Northwest (2nd ed.). The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation (2009)	Provides species-specific information on distribution, habitat, life history, and conservation needs.	<a href="https://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/02_XercesSoc_Freshwater-Mussels-of-the-PNW_web.pdf">09-002_02_XercesSoc_Freshwater-Mussels-of-the-PNW_web.pdf</a>

Oregon Conservation Strategy (2016). ODFW	Identifies freshwater mussels and aquatic habitats as conservation priorities.	<a href="http://www.oregonconservationstrategy.org">www.oregonconservationstrategy.org</a>
Assessment and Status Report on the Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel ( <i>Gonidea angulata</i> ) in Canada (COSEWIC 2003)	Offers additional context on species status and threats across its range	<a href="#">Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel (<i>Gonidea angulata</i>)</a>

DRAFT



## **OWEB Focused Investment Partnership Priority**

### **OREGON CLOSED LAKES BASIN WETLAND HABITATS - 2025 Draft Revisions**

#### **Summary Statement of Priority**

---

The OWEB Board will consider proposals for investment in **Closed Lakes Basin wetland habitats** for Initiatives that address habitat conservation and restoration needs to achieve ecological outcomes over time at the landscape scale.

OWEB's Focused Investment Priority for Closed Lakes Basin wetland habitats guides voluntary actions that address primary limiting factors related to the quality of this habitat type. These actions also support and/or improve watershed functions and processes. **Actions will be guided by the habitat, limiting factors, ecological outcomes, and conservation approaches outlined in Oregon's State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), the Intermountain West Joint Venture's (IWJV) Habitat Conservation Strategy Implementation Plan, and other plans listed at the end of this document.**

#### **Background**

---

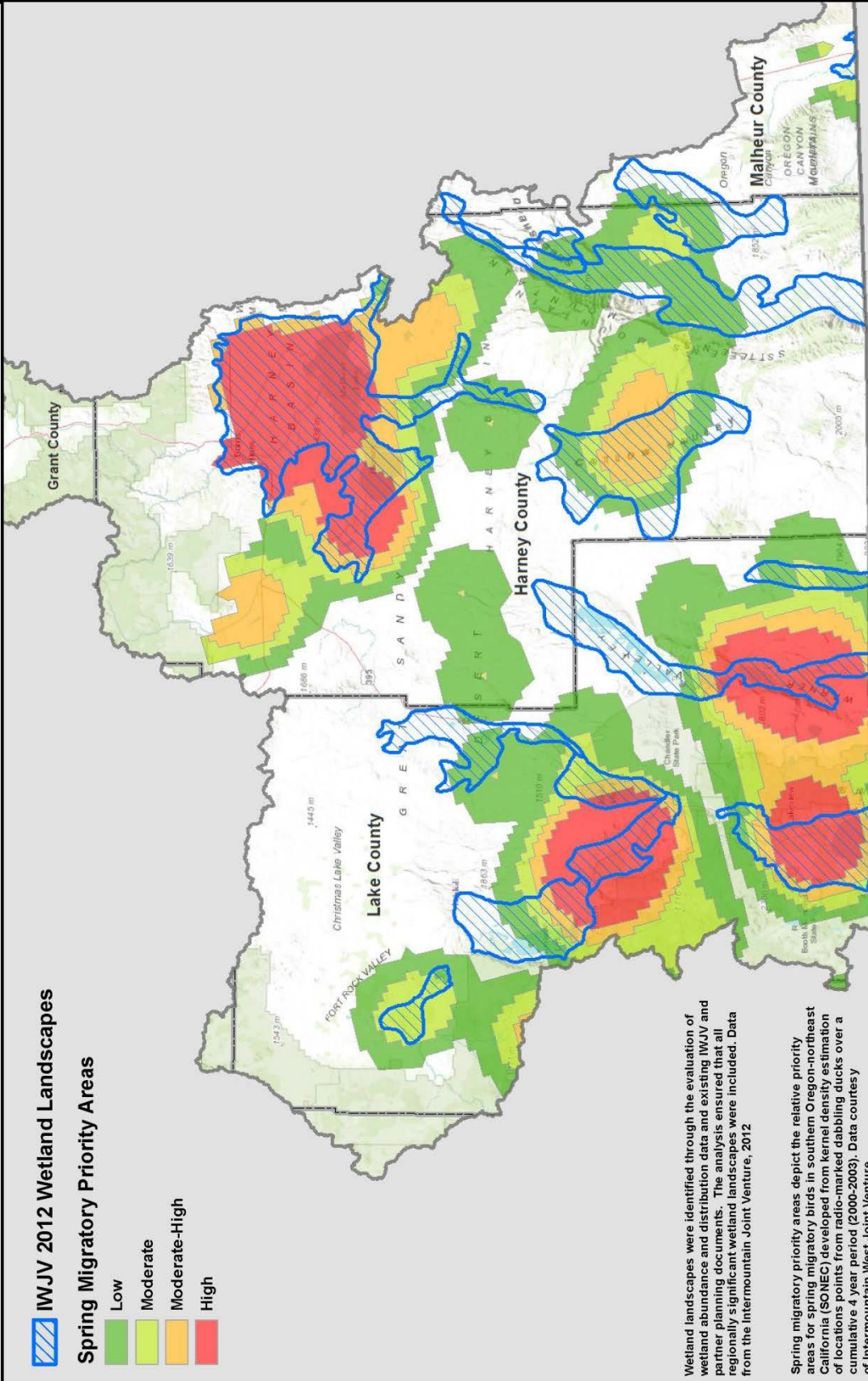
##### **Where it occurs**

The Closed Lakes Basin wetlands exist within the Southern Oregon Northeast California (SONEC) region, which is a portion of the Closed Lakes network within the Great Basin (see map). The SONEC region geography and habitat has been defined by the IWJV and in the federal North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The Closed Lakes Basin within the SONEC region is an important part of the Pacific Flyway. Within the SONEC region, a significant amount of wetland and floodplain habitat is located on private land, most of which is managed as flood-irrigated hay and pastureland. These habitats are critical for migratory and resident birds and also support native fish species.

In Oregon, Closed Lakes Basin wetland habitat exists primarily in Lake and Harney Counties (including Malheur National Wildlife Refuge), with a small portion in Malheur County. Closed Lakes Basin wetland habitats include shallow lakes and marshes, wet meadows, and irrigated pasturelands. Many of the region's smaller historical wetlands have been lost due to conversion or degradation from stream channelization, water use, water diversions, and historical overgrazing. Many of the managed wetland/pastures exist in the floodplain of tributaries and lakes in the area. Closed Lakes Basin wetlands represent a unique chain of desert oases that, as an integrated network, provide critical habitat and food for waterbirds throughout the year.

---

# Focused Investment Priority for Oregon Closed Lakes Basin Wetland Habitats



## 2012 IWJV Wetland Landscapes and Spring Migratory Priority Areas Within the Lakes Reporting Basin



**Indicator species and/or species of interest supported by this habitat**

The SONEC region, which includes the Oregon Closed Lakes Basin, provides essential wetland habitats important for migratory birds. Moreover, the Closed Lakes Basin provides crucial breeding and wintering habitats for many bird species. The majority of North America's snowy plovers (federally listed under the Endangered Species Act [ESA]), North America's eared grebes, long-billed dowitchers, white-faced ibis, and many Species of Greatest Conservation Need as identified in the Oregon SWAP breed, nest, or otherwise use Oregon's Closed Lakes Basin during migration. Additional migratory and resident bird species also rely on this habitat.

Of particular importance is habitat for migratory bird species during spring migration. This region provides a diversity of food production at different salt regimes throughout the year; thus, seasonal water conditions drive habitat function and productivity. Additionally, the Closed Lakes Basin wetlands support native fish species such as Warner and Modoc sucker fish (ESA-listed), tui chub, and redband trout.

**Why it is significant to the state**

Closed Lakes Basin wetlands are ecologically unique high-desert wetlands that provide critical habitat for numerous migratory and resident bird species. This region has international importance as habitat for migratory birds, including the ESA-listed species cited above. Oregon's Closed Lakes Basin wetland habitats are a significant portion of the greater SONEC complex of wetlands that are so critical to the millions of birds that travel the Pacific Flyway each year. The IWJV recognizes the SONEC region as one of two priority areas in the Intermountain West for wetland-dependent birds. Greater sage-grouse depend on these wetland habitats for foraging habitat for brooding (see related priority). ESA-listed Warner and Modoc sucker fish also are found in this habitat, as referenced above.

Indigenous people in the region have long utilized the lake and wetland resources for food, tools, and shelter. The region fosters an historic and vitally important ranching community and associated economy that depends on the ecological health of these wetland habitats. Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and other wildlife areas in the Closed Lakes Basin are critical recreation and economic resources for these rural counties.

Water is extremely limited in this region. Climate change is expected to affect wetlands through shifting precipitation patterns, increased droughts, more high severity wildfire, and warmer temperatures. This may further reduce water availability, which could slow habitat recovery, increase invasive vegetation, and lead to higher salinity levels in lakes and wetlands. This lends added urgency to the importance of conservation efforts in this unique habitat.

### **Key limiting factors and/or ecological threats, with a focus on ecosystem function and process**

- Loss and degradation of wetlands habitat, including salinization and an imbalance of seasonal saline gradients.
- Seasonal water availability as a result of altered natural hydrologic functioning, including the conversion to sprinkler irrigation from flood irrigation that provided surrogate wetland habitat and impacts of climate change.
- Fragmented habitat as a result of dam building that altered stream networks to facilitate land drainage and agriculture development.
- Proliferation of invasive common carp, whose feeding behavior has destroyed vast natural marsh habitat by uprooting vegetation and increasing suspended sediments and turbidity. This significantly reduces vegetation otherwise available as a food source for birds and other wildlife.
- Invasive plant and macroinvertebrate species, which can reduce food production for native bird species.
- Landscape-scale disturbance, including wildfire, landslides, flooding or similar events may occur within the FIP geography. Post-disturbance restoration actions addressing landscape-scale disturbance may be eligible FIP actions.
- Loss of wildlife habitat connectivity. Many species rely on the ability to move throughout the landscape to fulfill their daily and seasonal needs for access to food, shelter, and opportunities to reproduce. ODFW produced [Priority Wildlife Conservation Areas \(PWCAs\) maps](#) to show where habitat connectivity is most important. Fifty-four species were selected for the project as surrogates, representing a variety of taxa, movement types, dispersal capabilities, and sensitivity to anthropogenic threats. FIP Initiatives may include actions enhancing PWCAs within the geographic boundary of their FIP Initiative.

### **Reference plans**

- 1) Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan  
(<https://dfw.state.or.us/SWAP-Revision/>)
- 2) North American Waterfowl Management Plan  
(<https://www.fws.gov/partner/north-american-waterfowl-management-plan>)
- 3) Intermountain West Joint Venture Habitat Conservation Strategy Implementation Plan  
(<http://iwjv.org/2013-implementation-plan>)
- 4) Intermountain West Joint Venture Implementation Plan  
(<https://iwjv.org/resource/implementation-plan/>)
- 5) Alvord Lake Subbasin TMDL and WQMP  
(<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/tmdls/Pages/closedlakestmdl.aspx>)





## OWEB Focused Investment Partnership Priority

### DRY-TYPE FOREST HABITAT-2025 Draft Revisions

#### Summary Statement of Priority

---

The OWEB Board will consider proposals for investment in **dry-type forest habitat** for initiatives that address habitat conservation and restoration needs to achieve ecological outcomes over time at the landscape scale.

OWEB's Focused Investment Priority for dry-type forest habitat guides voluntary actions that address primary limiting factors related to the quality of this habitat type. These actions also support and/or improve watershed functions and processes. **These actions will be guided by the habitat, limiting factors, ecological outcomes, and conservation approaches outlined in Oregon's State Wildlife Action Plan and other plans listed at the end of this document.**

#### Background

---

##### Where it occurs

Dry-type forests exist east of the Cascade Mountains and southwest in the Umpqua and Rogue watersheds of the Siskiyou and Klamath Mountains. This forest type spans 14 million acres in Oregon, constitutes roughly half of all forests in the state, and accounts for approximately 25 percent of the state's land cover. These forests are associated with nine national forests in Oregon and encompass land managed by the Bureau of Land Management in southwest Oregon. "Dry-type" is a general term for forests that consist of dry pine forests, dry mixed conifer, moist-mixed conifer, and moist-cold forests.

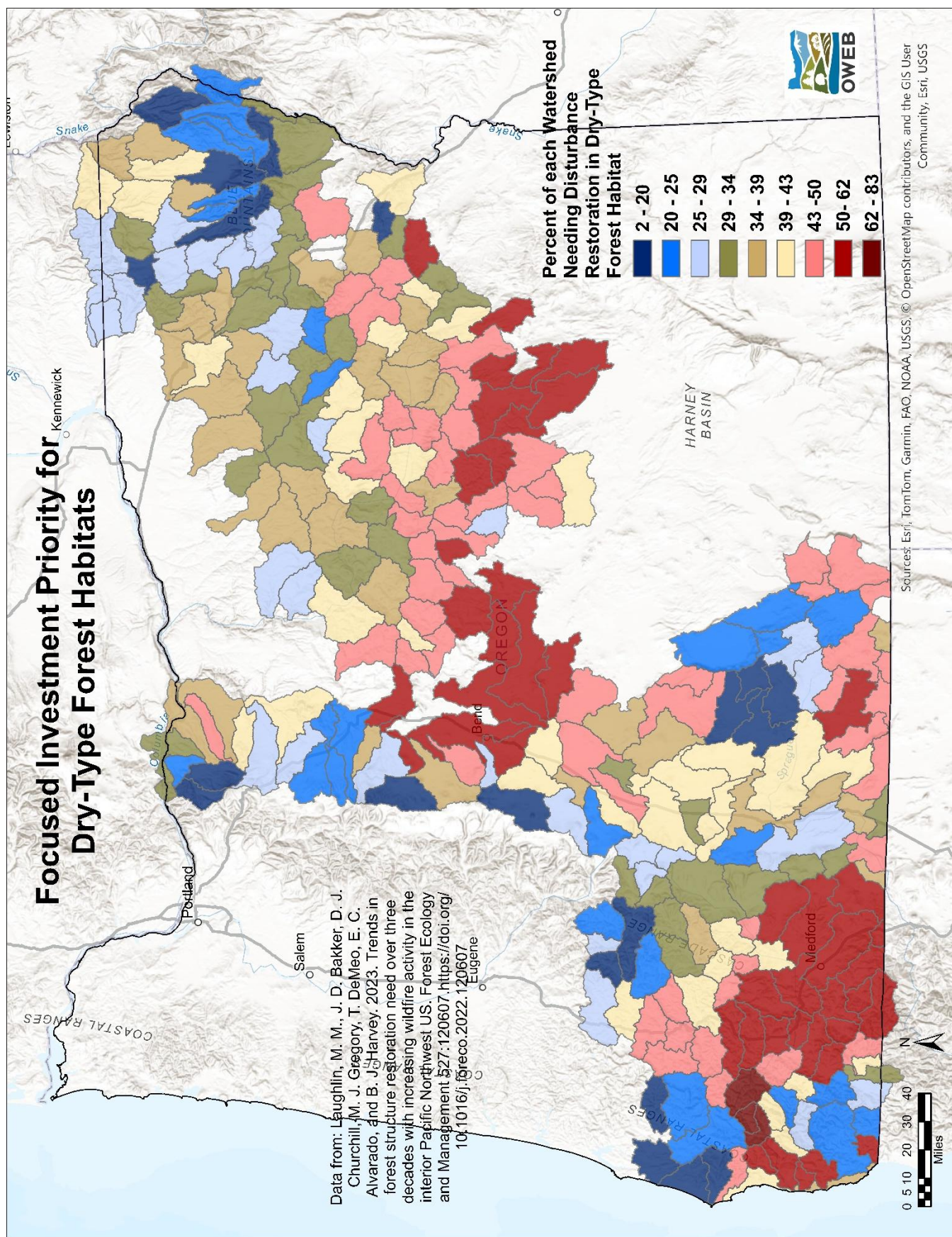
##### Indicator species and/or species of interest supported by this habitat

Dry-type forest habitat contains a wide variety of tree and understory species. Historically, these forests experienced more frequent low- intensity fires that would burn off the understory and small trees on a 7-15 year cycle, resulting in a diverse and robust mosaic of older, larger aforementioned tree species mixed with areas of younger trees, stands, and forests. Fire suppression practices in the past century have altered forest species composition and succession and increased susceptibility to uncharacteristic large wildfires due to elevated fuel loads. In addition to the building of fuel levels, forest management practices during the last century have reduced diversity of species and age structures and increased densities of trees within this forest type.

Dry-type forest habitats support a variety of fish and wildlife species, including white-headed woodpecker and northern goshawk, ringtail, fisher, Pacific marten, red-tree vole, Northern Spotted Owl, salmon, Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer.

---





### **Why it is significant to the state**

Dry-type forests cover vast acreages in Oregon and are at critical risk for severe wildfires. These forest systems support a diverse range of aquatic and terrestrial species, including federally listed fish and bird species. Properly functioning dry-type forests are also critical to maintaining healthy watershed function and processes. Dry-type forests are iconic in Oregon, of cultural significance to Native American tribes, provide people with clean water, and have economic importance related to natural resource-based economies in rural communities. In addition, these areas support an increasingly important recreation-based economy.

### **Key limiting factors and/or ecological threats, with a focus on ecosystem function and process**

Departure from historic disturbance regimes has increased the risk of more severe disturbance from hotter burning wildfires. In order to restore ecosystem function and process and protect culturally important areas (including food), the following limiting factors and ecological threats need to be addressed:

- Severe wildfires as a result of fuel buildup in the absence of fire, past and some current landscape forest management practices, and hotter and dryer conditions due to climate change.
- Altered fire regimes resulting in forest densification, changes in species composition, and more continuous, homogeneous fuel conditions across the landscape.
- Loss of multi-age class, complex forests with habitat mosaics due to wildfire and past logging practices, and habitat connectivity.
- Invasive species and more widespread and uncharacteristic insect and disease outbreaks leading to accelerated tree mortality.
- Lack of land management capacity, including ability to implement prescribed and/or cultural burns.
- Landscape-scale disturbance, including wildfire, landslides, flooding or similar events may occur within the FIP geography. Post-disturbance restoration actions addressing landscape-scale disturbance may be eligible FIP actions.
- Loss of wildlife habitat connectivity. Many species rely on the ability to move throughout the landscape to fulfill their daily and seasonal needs for access to food, shelter, and opportunities to reproduce. ODFW produced [Priority Wildlife Conservation Areas \(PWCAs\) maps](#) to show where habitat connectivity is most important. Fifty-four species were selected for the project as surrogates, representing a variety of taxa, movement types, dispersal capabilities, and sensitivity to anthropogenic threats. FIP Initiatives may include actions enhancing PWCAs within the geographic boundary of their FIP Initiative.

### **Reference plans**

- 1) Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan <https://dfw.state.or.us/SWAP-Revision/>
- 2) Restoration of Dry Forests in Eastern Oregon <https://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/FireLearningNetwork/NetworkProducts/Pages/Dry-Forest-Guide-2013.aspx>

- 3) General Technical Report – The Ecology and Management of Moist Mixed-Conifer Forests in Eastern Oregon and Washington: A Synthesis of the Relevant Biophysical Science and Implications for Future Land Management  
<https://research.fs.usda.gov/treearch/47086>
- 4) Haugo, R., Zanger, C., DeMeo, T., Ringo, C., Shlisy, A., Blakenship, K., Simpson, M., Mellen-McLean, K., Kertis, J., Stern, M. 2015. A New Approach to Evaluate Forest Structure Restoration Needs Across Oregon and Washington, USA. Forest Ecology and Management 335: 37-50.  
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378112714005519>
- 5) Landowners' Options for Prescribed Burning  
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pub/em-9496-landowners-options-prescribed-burning>





## OWEB Focused Investment Partnership Priority

### ESTUARY HABITATS - 2025 Draft Revisions

#### Summary Statement of Priority

---

The OWEB Board will consider proposals for investment in **estuary habitats** for Initiatives that address habitat conservation and restoration needs to achieve ecological outcomes over time at the landscape scale.

OWEB's Focused Investment Priority for estuary habitats guides voluntary actions that address primary limiting factors related to the quality of this habitat type. These actions also support and/or improve watershed functions and processes to benefit fish and wildlife that depend on estuary habitats. **Actions will be guided by the habitat, limiting factors, ecological outcomes, and conservation approaches outlined in Oregon's State Wildlife Action Plan and other plans listed at the end of this document.**

#### Background

---

##### Where it occurs

Estuaries exist at the confluence of freshwater rivers and the ocean. Estuarine habitat at these confluences is determined by the extent of tidal influence on these freshwater rivers (see map). Estuarine tidal basins typically include a marine-dominated zone, a mixing zone, and a brackish-to-fresh zone that can extend many miles inland away from the ocean. Estuary habitats experience regular fluctuations in salinity, water levels, sunlight, and oxygen.

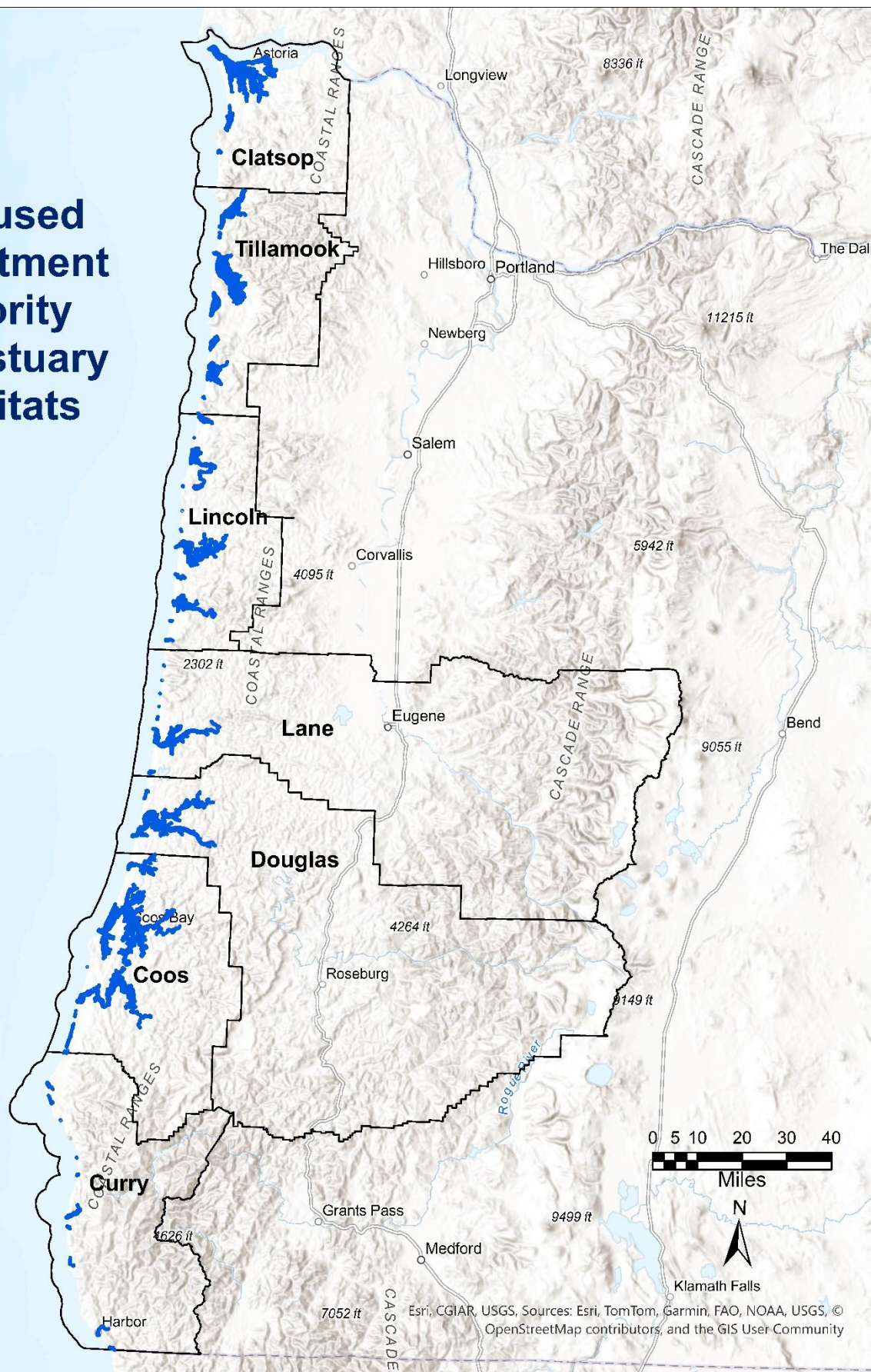
The spatial extent of Oregon estuaries and tidal wetlands has been significantly reduced over the past 150 years due to human development and agriculture. The greatest losses of historic estuarine habitat have occurred within low-lying estuarine tidal basins. Anthropogenic alterations to habitat and natural hydrologic processes, including diking, tide gates, dredging, and channelization, among other impacts, have contributed to estuarine habitat losses and impairments, including large expanses of historic forested tidal wetlands (>90%), substantial saltwater and freshwater marshes, and other tidal wetlands (ODFW, 2026).

##### Indicator species and/or species of interest supported by this habitat

Oregon estuaries provide a diversity of complex, productive habitat that is critical for many species of fish and wildlife, including salmon, rockfish, crab, shrimp, invertebrates, marine mammals, and birds. Estuaries provide critical breeding and nursery areas for rockfish, lingcod, and greenling, as well as rearing grounds for juvenile coho, Chinook, and chum salmon. Oregon estuaries support some component of the life cycle for up to three-quarters of all harvested fish species (ODFW, 2026), largely due to the high productivity and diversity of habitats, including those provided by eelgrass beds. Native eelgrass is an important component of an estuary, providing habitat for Species of Greatest Conservation Need and other species of interest, including Black Brant, Dungeness crab, black rockfish, copper rockfish, and kelp greenling.

---

# Focused Investment Priority for Estuary Habitats



### **Why it is significant to the state**

Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 16 seeks to recognize and protect the unique environmental, economic, and social values of estuaries and their associated wetlands and (where appropriate) to protect, maintain, and restore the long-term environmental, economic, and social values, diversity, and benefits of Oregon's estuaries. The Lower Columbia River estuary and Tillamook Bay estuaries are each designated as an "estuary of national significance" by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (two of 28 National Estuary Programs managed under the Clean Water Act). Many Oregon estuaries have Total Maximum Daily Loads developed for water quality in these habitats, as estuaries play an important role in filtering sediment, nutrients, pathogens, and other contaminants from aquatic environments.

Estuary habitats are integral to the existence and success of various ESA listed fish and wildlife species. There are numerous species that are adapted to the unique habitat conditions that estuaries provide and are thus dependent on this habitat type. Estuaries are of cultural significance to Native American tribes and also provide critical services for the people of Oregon. Healthy estuaries help store carbon, mitigate ocean acidification, and buffer storm wave damage to stabilize shorelines from erosion and protect coastal communities from increased storms and floods.

### **Key limiting factors and/or ecological threats, with a focus on ecosystem function and process**

- Increasing development and land-use conversions;
- Alteration of natural hydrological processes and streamflow, including limited salt- and fresh-water exchange due to such issues as tide gates;
- Water-quality degradation (including increased bacterial loads; decreased dissolved oxygen; and toxic contaminants from industry, agriculture, and urban development)
- Loss of habitat complexity and connectivity degraded tidal areas;
- Invasive aquatic plant and animal species;
- Impacts of climate change (e.g., sea-level rise, increased acidification);
- Nutrient cycling and sediment transport;
- Landscape-scale disturbance, including wildfire, landslides, flooding or similar events may occur within the FIP geography. Post-disturbance restoration actions addressing landscape-scale disturbance may be eligible FIP actions; and
- Loss of wildlife habitat connectivity. Many species rely on the ability to move throughout the landscape to fulfill their daily and seasonal needs for access to food, shelter, and opportunities to reproduce. ODFW produced [Priority Wildlife Conservation Areas \(PWCAs\) maps](#) to show where habitat connectivity is most important. Fifty-four species were selected for the project as surrogates, representing a variety of taxa, movement types, dispersal capabilities, and sensitivity to anthropogenic threats. FIP Initiatives may include actions enhancing PWCAs within the geographic boundary of their FIP Initiative.

### **Reference plans**

- 1) Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan  
(<https://dfw.state.or.us/SWAP-Revision/>)
- 2) NOAA Fisheries Columbia River Estuary ESA Recovery Plan Module for Salmon and

Steelhead, 2011

(<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/columbia-river-estuary-esa-recovery-plan-module-salmon-and-steelhead>)

- 3) ODFW Lower Columbia River Conservation and Recovery Plan for Oregon Populations of Salmon and Steelhead ([http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/CRP/lower\\_columbia\\_plan.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/CRP/lower_columbia_plan.asp))
- 4) Oregon Coastal Multi-Species Conservation and Management Plan, 2014 ([http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/CRP/coastal\\_multispecies.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/CRP/coastal_multispecies.asp))

DRAFT





## **OWEB Focused Investment Partnership Priority**

### **OAK AND PRAIRIE HABITAT- 2025 Draft Revisions**

#### **Summary Statement of Priority**

---

The OWEB Board will consider proposals for investment in **oak** and **prairie habitats** for initiatives that address habitat conservation and restoration needs to achieve ecological outcomes over time at the landscape scale.

OWEB's Focused Investment Priority for oak and prairie habitat guides voluntary actions that address primary ecological threats and limiting factors related to the quality of this habitat type. **These actions will be guided by the habitat, limiting factors, ecological outcomes, and conservation approaches outlined in the State Wildlife Action Plan and other plans and strategies listed on the last page of this document.**

#### **Background**

---

##### **Where it occurs**

Oak and prairie habitats are often in conflict with other land-uses associated with a higher economic value, which has led to the loss of approximately 72% of its historical habitat range since the 1800s. However, oak and associated prairie habitats still exist throughout the state. Three types of oak habitats in Oregon include: "oak savannah" (5-25% oak coverage), "oak woodlands" (25-75% oak coverage), and "oak forests" (greater than 75% oak coverage). These oak habitats primarily occur in three areas of the state: 1) Oak and prairie habitats of the Willamette Valley ecoregion; 2) Oak woodlands of the East Cascades ecoregion and foothills along the Columbia Gorge, including both Hood and Wasco counties and south to White River; and 3) Southern Oregon oak and chaparral habitats of the Klamath, Umpqua and Rogue River ecoregions. Current habitat data layers as mapped may not fully capture all existing oak habitat; partnerships' mapped areas will also be considered eligible in future FIP applications.

##### **Indicator species and/or species of interest supported by this habitat**

The Oregon white oak is the indicator species for oak and associated prairie habitats. Species that are supported by these habitats include: streaked horned lark, the western meadowlark, Lewis' woodpecker, white-breasted nuthatch, western bluebird, acorn woodpecker, western gray squirrel, Columbian white-tailed deer, Fender's blue butterfly, Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, Kincaid's lupine, and the Willamette daisy, among many other plant species depending on the region. At least seven federally listed Endangered Species Act (ESA) species are dependent on these habitats.

---



### **Why it is significant to the state**

In a national assessment, oak and associated prairie and chaparral habitats are one of the most endangered ecosystems in the U.S. due to land conversions and altered fire regimes, these habitats are home to a variety of wildlife and plant species addressed in the State Wildlife Action Plan. Maintaining the connectivity of oaks and their associated habitats is crucial to support species utilization of greater habitat range, but also to facilitating the gradual movement of species to the north from California in response to climate change. In addition, these habitat types are iconic and culturally important to Native American tribes. Tribes utilize cultural fire to sustain culturally important foods. Cultural fire practices are also important to maintain the health and biodiversity of oak and prairie habitats.

### **Key limiting factors and/or ecological threats, with a focus on ecosystem function and process**

- Habitat loss and fragmentation due to land-use conversion (e.g., residential, timber, agricultural);
- Habitat degradation, including shrub-tree and conifer encroachment, invasive species encroachment, including Mediterranean oak borer and disease such as sudden oak death, a fungal tree pathogen; and
- Impaired habitat persistence, due to loss of fire disturbance regimes, over-grazing, and the subsequent lack of recruitment of young oaks.
- Loss of large diameter oak trees with lateral limb structure and cavities due to densely stocked trees, grazed trees, shaded trees and fire stressed trees that do not develop lateral limbs, cavities or higher acorn crops of open-grown trees.
- Landscape-scale disturbance, including wildfire, landslides, flooding or similar events may occur within the FIP geography. Post-disturbance restoration actions addressing landscape-scale disturbance may be eligible FIP actions.
- Loss of wildlife habitat connectivity. Many species rely on the ability to move throughout the landscape to fulfill their daily and seasonal needs for access to food, shelter, and opportunities to reproduce. ODFW produced [Priority Wildlife Conservation Areas \(PWCAs\) maps](#) to show where habitat connectivity is most important. Fifty-four species were selected for the project as surrogates, representing a variety of taxa, movement types, dispersal capabilities, and sensitivity to anthropogenic threats. FIP Initiatives may include actions enhancing PWCAs within the geographic boundary of their FIP Initiative.

### **Reference plans**

- 1) Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan  
(<https://dfw.state.or.us/SWAP-Revision/>)
- 2) Recovery Plan for Prairie species of Western Oregon and SW Washington (USFWS 2010)  
([Recovery Plan for the Prairie Species of Western Oregon and Southwestern Washington | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#))
- 3) Oregon White Oak Restoration Strategy for National Forest System Lands East of the Cascade Range (USFS 2013)  
([Oak Strategy final.pdf](#))





## OWEB Focused Investment Partnership Priority SAGEBRUSH/SAGE-STEPPE HABITAT- 2025 Draft Revisions

### Summary Statement of Priority

---

The OWEB Board will consider proposals for investment in **sagebrush/sage-steppe habitat** for initiatives that address habitat conservation and restoration needs to achieve ecological outcomes over time at the landscape scale.

OWEB's Focused Investment Priority for sagebrush/sage-steppe habitat guides voluntary actions that address primary ecological threats and limiting factors related to the quality of this habitat type. These actions also will support and/or improve ecosystem functions and processes, including those required by Greater sage-grouse, which is an indicator species for this habitat type. **These actions will be guided by the habitat, limiting factors, ecological outcomes, and conservation approaches outlined in Oregon's State Wildlife Action Plan and other plans listed at the end of this document.**

Focal areas for this Priority are: 1) Existing healthy, functioning sagebrush/sage-steppe habitats that support a variety of species, and areas of opportunity to grow this habitat identified by Oregon State University, the Institute for Natural Resource, and the USDA Agricultural Research Service, and 2) Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs) for sage-grouse and the important connectivity corridors between these areas PACs do not represent individual populations, but rather key areas that have been identified as crucial to ensure adequate representation, redundancy, and resilience for conservation of its associated population or populations. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW's) sage-grouse strategy identifies core areas of habitat that align with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's PAC habitats. The core area approach uses biological information to identify important habitats with the objective of protecting the highest density breeding areas.

### Background

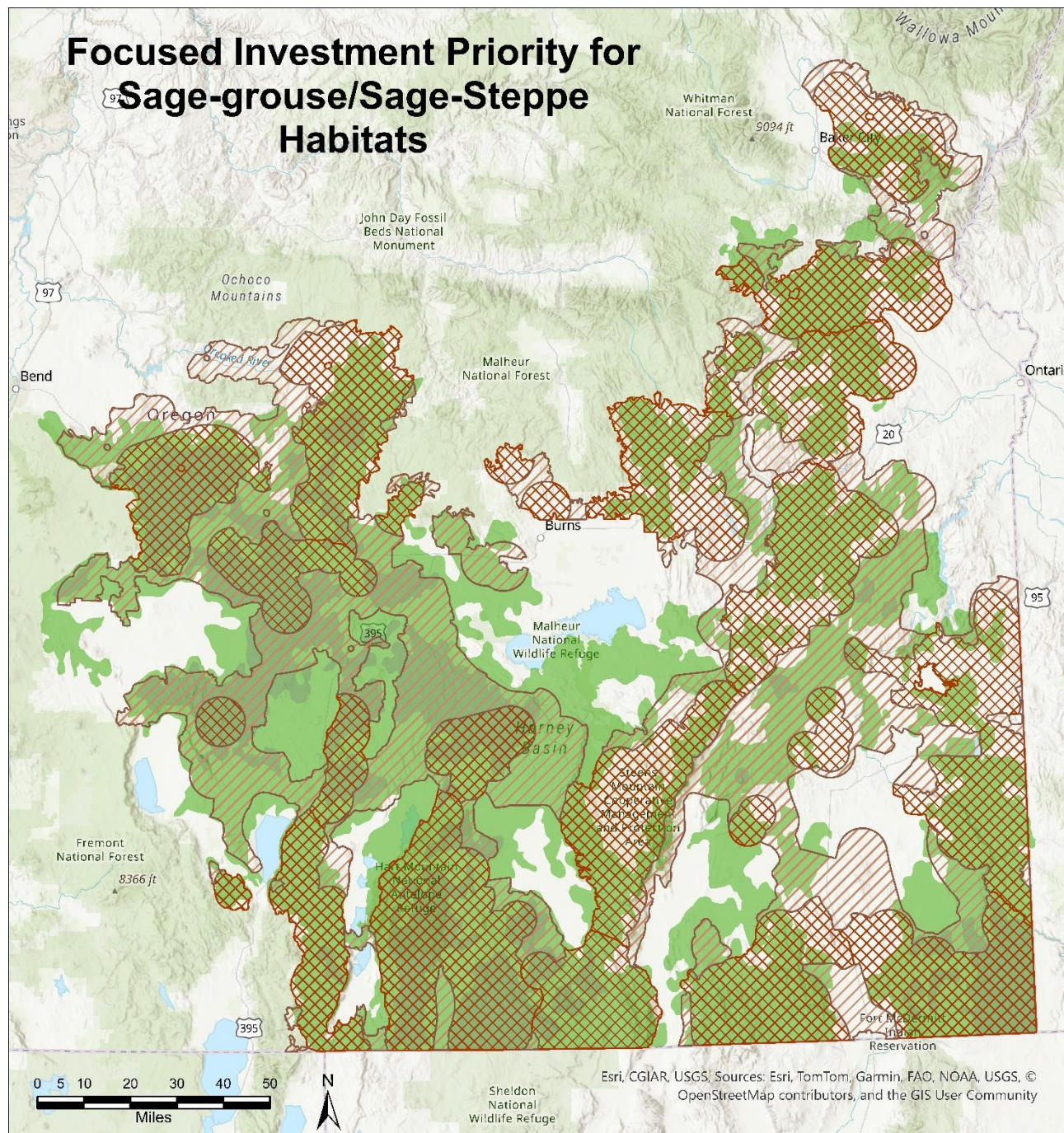
---

#### Where it occurs

Sage-steppe habitat occurs throughout eastern Oregon and in parts of Central Oregon. Several ecoregions identified in the Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan (i.e., Northern Basin and Range, Blue Mountains, Columbia Plateau, and East Cascades) contain this habitat type. Since the 1800s large areas of sagebrush habitat have been lost, including 82% of the habitat in the Blue Mountains ecoregion and an estimated 59% of habitat in the Northern Basin and Range ecoregion.

These habitats are both extensive and diverse. In general, sagebrush habitats occur on dry flats and plains, rolling hills, rocky hill slopes, saddles and ridges where precipitation is low. Sagebrush-steppe is dominated by grasses and forbs (more than 25 percent of the area) with an open shrub layer. In sagebrush steppe, natural fire regimes historically maintained a patchy distribution of shrubs and predominance of grasses. Connectivity corridors of similar habitats between these areas are important to connect otherwise fragmented sage-steppe habitat.

---



**Sage-grouse Areas**

- Core Area Habitat
- Low-Density Area Habitat

**Sagebrush Areas**

- Core Area Habitat
- Growth Opportunity Area Habitat

**NOTE: Sage-grouse Areas data from ODFW and Sagebrush Areas data from Sagebrush Conservation Design.**  
<https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/item/62d57e89d34e87fffb2dda62>





**Indicator species and/or species of interest supported by this habitat**

State Wildlife Action Plan Species of Greatest Conservation Need associated with sagebrush include Greater sage-grouse, ferruginous hawk, loggerhead shrike, sage sparrow, Brewer's sparrow, sagebrush lizard, Washington ground squirrel, and pygmy rabbits. Other wildlife closely associated with sagebrush include black-throated sparrow, sage thrasher, sagebrush vole, and pronghorn.

**Why it is significant to the state**

Sagebrush/sage-steppe habitat is an imperiled habitat that supports a range of species. These areas have deep historic and cultural significance to Native Americans and are associated with an economically and socially important ranching and agricultural industry in communities throughout a large portion of the state. Healthy sagebrush/sage-steppe habitat provides opportunities for carbon storage, which can be quickly lost with catastrophic wildfire and resulting proliferation of invasive annual grasses that offer limited carbon storage benefits.

**Key limiting factors and/or ecological threats, with a focus on ecosystem function and process**

- Altered fire regimes, including decades of fire suppression and climate change has resulted in changes to native plant communities and increased risk of habitat loss due to intense wildfires.
- Juniper encroachment on sagebrush/sage-steppe habitat and proliferation of invasive annual grasses, which increase the frequency, intensity and extent of wildfires.
- Conversion to other land uses, which results in habitat loss and connectivity.
- Limitations of current restoration techniques and the need for additional restoration approaches, particularly in low-elevation areas that face severe challenges to native plant species regeneration following wildfire.
- Landscape-scale disturbance, including wildfire, landslides, flooding or similar events may occur within the FIP geography. Post-disturbance restoration actions addressing landscape-scale disturbance may be eligible FIP actions.
- Loss of wildlife habitat connectivity. Many species rely on the ability to move throughout the landscape to fulfill their daily and seasonal needs for access to food, shelter, and opportunities to reproduce. ODFW produced [Priority Wildlife Conservation Areas \(PWCAs\) maps](#) to show where habitat connectivity is most important. Fifty-four species were selected for the project as surrogates, representing a variety of taxa, movement types, dispersal capabilities, and sensitivity to anthropogenic threats. FIP Initiatives may include actions enhancing PWCAs within the geographic boundary of their FIP Initiative.

**Reference plans**

- 1) Oregon State Wildlife Action Plan  
<https://dfw.state.or.us/SWAP-Revision/>
- 2) ODFW's Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon  
[https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/sagegrouse/docs/GRSG\\_Conservation\\_Assessment\\_and\\_Strategy\\_April\\_25-11.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/sagegrouse/docs/GRSG_Conservation_Assessment_and_Strategy_April_25-11.pdf)
- 3) Bureau of Land Management Sage-Grouse Habitat Plans  
<https://www.blm.gov/programs/fish-and-wildlife/sagegrouse/blm-sagegrouse-plans>

4) Oregon Sage Grouse Action Plan

<https://hub.oregonexplorer.info/pages/sagebrush-oregon-sage-grouse-action-plan>

DRAFT



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

Agenda Item L

## **Land Acquisition Grants**

### **Program Modernization Update**

Board Meeting October 28-29, 2025



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



OREGON  
**WATERSHED**  
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360  
Salem OR 97301-1290  
[www.oregon.gov/oweb](http://www.oregon.gov/oweb)  
(503) 986-0178

*Agenda Item L supports OWEB's Strategic Plan priority #6: Take bold and innovative action toward funding projects that advance climate resilience.*

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
**FROM:** Renee Davis, Acquisitions & Special Programs Manager  
Miriam Forney, Land Acquisitions Coordinator  
Sara O'Brien, Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item L – Land Acquisition Grant Program Modernization Update  
October 28-29, 2025, Board Meeting

### I. Introduction

OWEB's Measure(M) 76 Land Acquisition grant program implements key statutory components including "Securing long-term protection for lands and waters that provide significant habitats for native fish and wildlife" (Oregon Revised Statute [ORS] 541.941) and "Acquiring from willing owners, interests in land or water that will protect or restore native fish or wildlife habitats" (ORS 541.956). This staff report provides an overview of the land acquisition grant program modernization process that is in progress.

### II. Background

The first land acquisition grants were awarded under the Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board, the precursor to OWEB. Since 1998, the agency has funded 78 fee-simple projects encompassing 90 properties and 21 conservation easement projects completed by local partner organizations such as land trusts, Tribes, and municipalities. These projects—totaling approximately \$60 million—conserve approximately 90,000 acres and include more than \$97 million in match funding.

Administrative rules for the OWEB land acquisition grant program were first adopted in 2005. Since that time, three additional rulemaking processes have been completed to update and refine program rules. In addition to those rulemaking processes, at least five separate processes—with the first occurring in 2013—involving surveys, work groups, and/or facilitated processes have occurred. The intent of these processes was to identify what was working well with the program, what challenges existed from the perspective of both OWEB and grantees/partners, and where mutual understanding and trust could be improved to ensure the land acquisition grant program was well utilized to advance conservation outcomes. Despite these collaborative efforts, partners continue to express significant concerns about challenges engaging with the program.

### **III. Initiation for Land Acquisition Modernization Process**

In late August 2024, Governor Tina Kotek sent OWEB executive director Sara O'Brien a letter outlining expectations of her as OWEB's new director. That letter included direction to the agency regarding the land acquisition grant program: "conduct a thorough review to eliminate non-essential requirements at both the front and back end of the process to better meet statutory and program intent." Since that time, Director O'Brien has outlined how she is translating direction from the Governor's letter—for both the land acquisition program and the agency more broadly—into action. Her focus includes more sustainable staffing for the agency, a more integrated program structure, and a more accessible grantee experience.

In Fall 2024, OWEB leadership began holding listening sessions with members of the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT) to obtain feedback about persisting issues and concerns related to the land acquisition grant program. Feedback sorted into three general categories: philosophical, cultural, and process.

Information from the listening sessions complements feedback obtained through multiple touchpoints with federally recognized Tribes including the 2021 assessment of OWEB's grantmaking to Tribes, a partnership learning report published in 2023, and subsequent direct, individual communications with each Federally recognized Tribe in 2023-24 to obtain feedback specifically about the land acquisition grant program. Much of the feedback obtained through the COLT and Tribal processes is similar.

The land acquisition modernization process was launched in early 2025 to address ongoing concerns and challenges and identify refinements and alternative approaches to solve problems and improve program utilization.

### **IV. Land Acquisition Modernization Workstreams and Status Updates**

Four workstreams are occurring or planned within the modernization process. These workstreams and status updates for each are described below.

1) Board-level work on foundational issues: This workstream involves the Acquisitions, Restoration, and Emerging Topics (ARE) committee and, ultimately, the full OWEB board. It delves into four foundational issues: a) use of conservation easements by OWEB to meet the statutory requirement for a title restriction; b) significant habitat and future conditions; c) other uses such as recreational, cultural uses, and working lands; and d) risk tolerance (which connects to the cultural and process categories noted above). After introductory informational sessions at its March and June meetings, the ARE committee turned its focus to the conservation easements question. See the ARE committee update under Agenda Item J for more information about the September meeting discussion. The ARE committee has added a meeting in October, just before the OWEB board meeting, to further digest and discuss the robust information provided at the September meeting. The December meeting of the ARE committee will include a Tribal partner panel and will begin shifting focus to significant habitat and future habitat conditions requirements under the land acquisition grant program. It is anticipated that the first round of preliminary/initial recommendations will be provided to the full OWEB Board by the committee at the January



2026 meeting. All committee meeting agendas, materials, and recordings can be found on [OWEB's website](#).

2) Tribal workstream: This workstream specifically focuses on substantive and process issues of concern to Tribes. As noted above, this workstream builds on multiple past touchpoints with federal recognized Tribes about challenges and opportunities they experience both across OWEB's grant programs and, in particular, with land acquisitions. OWEB leadership and staff completed work to define legal options available to OWEB for land acquisition grants and identified potential policy options that could help address potential barriers to Tribal government access to our land acquisitions program. OWEB's executive director and Tribal liaison have reached out to each Tribe to gauge interest in meetings to discuss the policy options. The Tribal workstream will begin to merge into ARE committee discussions where possible, while recognizing the sovereignty and unique role of Tribes.

3) Initial streamlining before the 2025 grant cycle: The 2025 initial streamlining workstream, which occurred April-July, scoped and implemented near-term, relatively minor process refinements prior to launch of the 2025 land acquisition grant cycle. The process identified early opportunities for initial streamlining to grantmaking processes (harking back to Governor Kotek's 2024 letter to Executive Director O'Brien), including changes to the grant application and program materials. Both internal and external work groups assisted with the scoping, and [refinements](#) were successfully incorporated into program documents.

4) Anticipated rulemaking beginning in 2026: This workstream is a placeholder as the ARE committee and full OWEB board discuss and provide direction to staff about modernization priorities. Some program refinements or alternative approaches emerging from the modernization process may be possible simply with changes to program guidance and procedures. However, it is anticipated that rulemaking may be required for some refinements or changes. More specificity about direction and timing for this workstream will be available in the coming months.

## **V. Update about 2025 Land Acquisition Grant Cycle**

The pre-application consultation period for the 2025 grant cycle opened on July 28, the online grant application opened on August 11, and grant applications were due on September 17. Nine grant applications were received for projects ranging from southwest Oregon to the north coast, and from central to eastern Oregon. The applications request more than \$12.2 million in funding, with more than \$11.6 million in match funding anticipated. By number of applications received, OWEB's land acquisition grant program has not experienced this level of demand since the 2013-2015 biennium.

## **VI. Recommendation**

This is an information item only.

## **VII. Link(s) for Additional Material**

- A. [Land Acquisition Modernization Process Background document for September 2025 OWEB ARE Committee Meeting](#)