



Place-Based Water Planning Funding

2026 Evaluation Summaries

October 14, 2026

Background

Place-Based Water Planning (PBWP) is a voluntary, locally-led, and collaborative process that brings together water interests to develop a holistic understanding of an area's water resources and plan for a water future that promotes and sustains a healthy economy, environment, and society. The Place-Based Water Planning Fund provides grants to support place-based initiatives to bring interested parties together, develop and update place-based water plans, and coordinate implementation of state-recognized plans (ORS 537.872 - 873). For the 2026 funding cycle, three grant types were available:

- 1. Planning Readiness Evaluation and Preparation (PREP) Grants:** Support the preparation for or assessment of a community's readiness to engage in place-based integrated water resources planning for a proposed planning area. *Up to \$100,000 (10% match required)*
- 2. Plan Development Grants:** Support development of a place-based integrated water resources plan that follows a shared governance agreement developed by the planning collaborative, and the process, content, and structure required by OWRD. *Up to \$450,000 (25% match required)*
- 3. Post-Plan Coordination Grants:** Support implementation coordination of a state-recognized place-based integrated water resources plan. *Up to \$150,000 (25% match required)*

The application deadline for the 2026 funding cycle was July 2, 2026. The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) received seven complete applications, requesting a total of \$1,193,743 in grant funding for Place-Based Water Planning. OWRD has \$2 million available to award.

Document Description

Below is a brief informational overview of complete grant applications received by July 2, 2026 for the Place-Based Water Planning 2026 Funding cycle and their evaluation summaries. Full applications may be accessed on OWRD's [funding cycle history](#) page or through the [PBWP Grant Website](#).

Applications were reviewed by a multi-agency Application Review Team (ART), consisting of OWRD, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, and the Oregon Departments of Agriculture, Environmental Quality, and Fish and Wildlife. The ART reviewed the applications based on each grant type's evaluation criteria (OAR 690-602-0600) and provided funding recommendations. Based on their evaluation, the ART recommends all seven applications for funding. The following evaluation summaries highlight the ART's comments gathered by OWRD during the application review process. Applicants may contact the Planning Coordinator to request a review meeting and receive additional evaluation feedback.

Next Steps

OWRD is soliciting public comment on the ART funding recommendations **through 5 p.m. on November 4, 2026**. Please submit comments to: PBWP@water.oregon.gov or Planning Coordinator, 725 Summer Street NE, Suite A, Salem, OR 97301.

Public comments submitted on the ART funding recommendation will be considered by the OWRD Director when making final award decisions, along with the recommendation itself, available funding, Department capacity to support grantees, and Tribal input. Awards will be announced in late 2026.

More Information

For questions about Place-Based Water Planning, please contact Lili Prah at 503-871-5868 or PBWP@water.oregon.gov.

Place-Based Water Planning Grant Applications Received

Grant Type	Planning Group	Applicant(s)	Counties	Grant Funds Requested
Planning Readiness Evaluation and Preparation (PREP)	Clackamas Watershed	Clackamas River Basin Council; Clackamas River Water Providers	Clackamas, Marion	\$100,000
	Columbia County Shared Waters Collaborative	Lower Columbia River Watershed Council	Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, Washington	\$99,847
	Contiguous SW Groundwater Limited Areas	Chehalem Mountain Water Council	Clackamas, Washington, Yamhill	\$95,250
Plan Development	Inland Rogue Water Resiliency Group	Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District	Jackson, Josephine	\$449,993
Post-Plan Coordination	Harney Community-Based Water Planning Collaborative	Harney County Watershed Council, Inc.	Harney	\$150,000
	Lower John Day Place-Based Partnership	Gilliam Soil and Water Conservation District	Gilliam, Sherman, Wheeler	\$150,000
	Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership	Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District	Lincoln	\$148,653
Total				\$1,193,743

Contents

Clackamas Watershed	3
Columbia County Shared Waters Collaborative	4
Contiguous SW Groundwater Limited Areas	5
Inland Rogue Water Resiliency Group	6
Harney Community-Based Water Planning Collaborative.....	7
Lower John Day Place-Based Partnership.....	8
Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership.....	9

Clackamas Watershed

Recommended for Funding

Application Information

Applicant Names: Clackamas River Basin Council; Clackamas River Water Providers

Counties: Clackamas, Marion

Grant Type: Planning Readiness Evaluation and Preparation (PREP)

Funding Requested: \$100,000

Planning Phase Leads: Clackamas River Basin Council and Clackamas River Water Providers

Proposed Grant Completion: June 30, 2028

Proposed Planning Area: 940 square miles

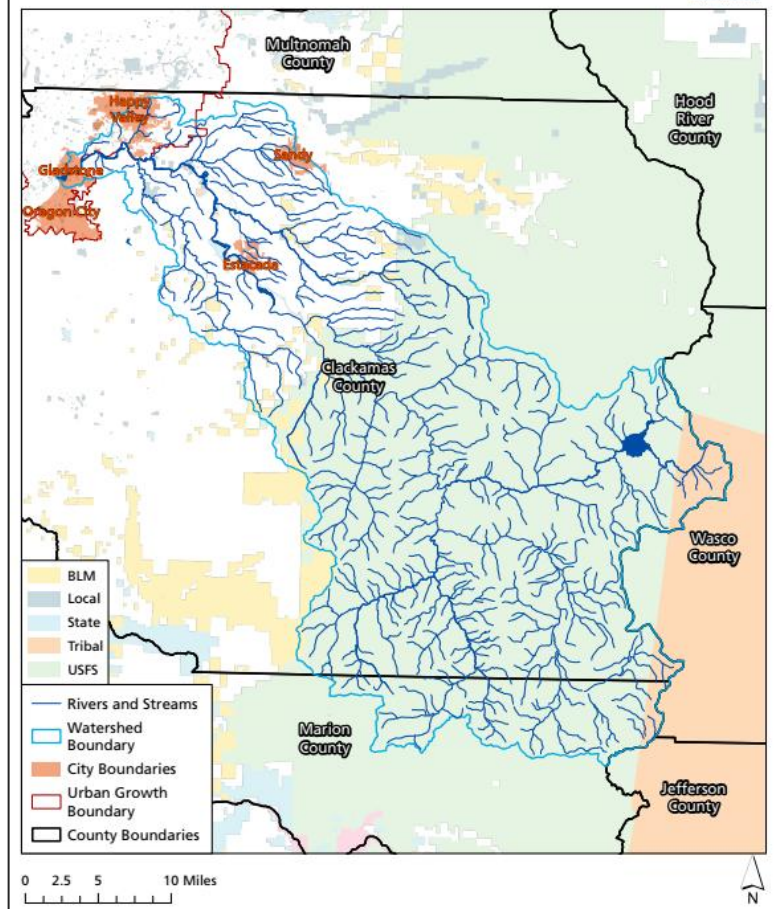
Evaluation Summary

The review team appreciated the history of diverse water interests working cooperatively in the basin and pointed towards the diverse interests represented by the applicants as an indication that the applicants could engage a balance of water interests on place-based water issues. The applicants identified

multiple ways that PBWP could benefit the basin by developing solutions to address the impact of climate change on drinking water supplies, native fish, and wild and scenic rivers, as well as water quality threats. The review team valued the applicants' plan for outreach to environmental justice communities. The application could have been strengthened by describing how the co-applicants will work together in the leadership role.

The review team recommends funding the application as proposed. If the Director awards the funds, the review team offers the following feedback. As the group considers PBWP, the ART cautions the applicants against entering the planning process with pre-determined solutions and instead encourages allowing the planning steps to guide their work to develop solutions collaboratively. The team also recommends further consideration of groundwater integration, as PBWP is an integrated process that considers both groundwater and surface water for instream and out-of-stream uses. During the PREP phase, the ART recommends focusing on outreach to new or underrepresented stakeholders and developing a shared understanding of the value of PBWP to the basin.

Map of Proposed Planning Area: Clackamas River Watershed



Columbia County Shared Waters Collaborative

Recommended for Funding

Application Information

Applicant Name: Lower Columbia River Watershed Council

Counties: Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, Washington

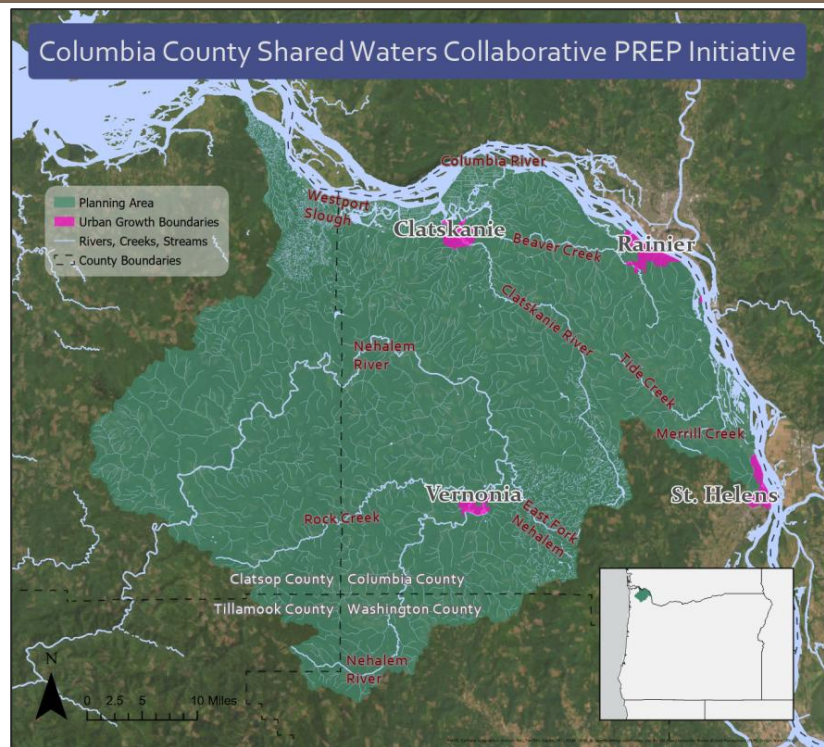
Grant Type: Planning Readiness Evaluation and Preparation (PREP)

Funding Requested: \$99,847

Planning Phase Leads: Columbia County Commissioner, Margaret Magruder; Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District Executive Director, Taylor Murray; Upper Nehalem Watershed Council Executive Director, Maggie Peyton; and the Interim Executive Director Lower Columbia River Watershed Council, Rachael Barry

Proposed Grant Completion: June 30, 2028

Proposed Planning Area: 839 square miles



Evaluation Summary

The review team appreciated the broad interest shown in pursuing PBWP and the history of working on water issues in the planning area, as well as the acknowledgement of why past efforts may have lost momentum. The applicant identified multiple ways that PBWP could benefit the planning area by considering fish habitat, water quality, and resiliency to climate change, flooding, and drought. The approach to public participation is based on reputable engagement guidance and best practices and the review team appreciated the inclusion of youth in the applicant's outreach strategy.

The review team recommends funding the application as proposed. If the Director awards the funds, the review team offers the following feedback. During the PREP phase, the applicant should consider the boundaries of the planning area and if/how the inclusion of two separate drainages may present challenges to the planning process. The review team also recommends focusing on relationship building and leadership continuity. Finally, the review team encourages the applicants to more fully consider groundwater and instream flow in integrated planning work.

Contiguous SW Groundwater Limited Areas

Recommended for Funding

Application Information

Applicant Name: Chehalem Mountain Water Council

Counties: Clackamas, Washington, Yamhill

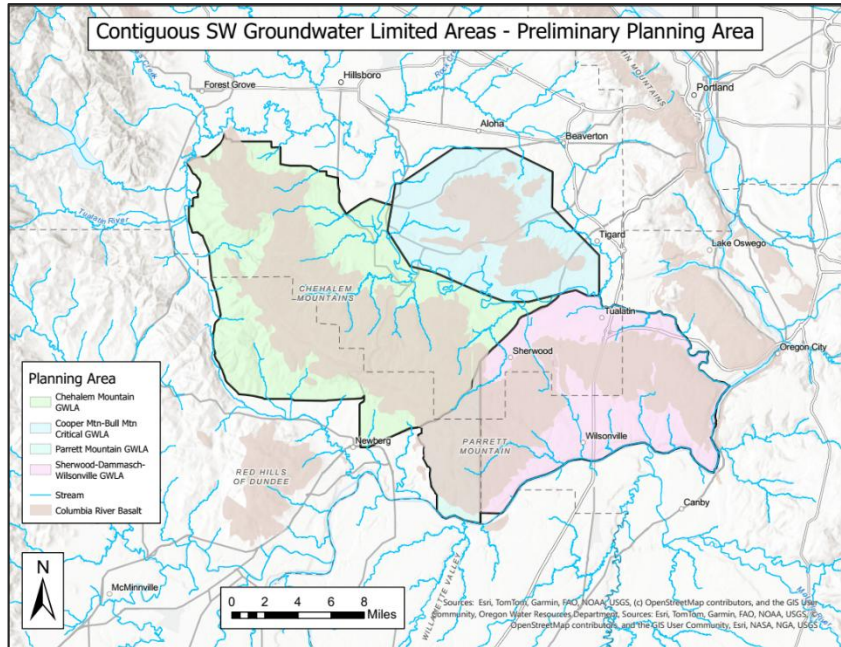
Grant Type: Planning Readiness Evaluation and Preparation (PREP)

Funding Requested: \$95,250

Planning Phase Lead: Karyn Hanson, President Chehalem Mountain Water Council

Proposed Grant Completion: June 1, 2028

Proposed Planning Area: 220 square miles



Evaluation Summary

The review team appreciated the application's letters of support, as well as the proposed engagement of Oregon's Kitchen Table to conduct outreach and engagement. The review team appreciated the unique challenges associated with this planning area, including water quality, water supply and variability, and the need to better understand the relationship between surface water and groundwater. The review team noted the application could have been strengthened by providing more detail on the proposed methodology and anticipated frequency of engagement.

The review team recommends funding the application as proposed. If the Director awards the funds, the review team offers the following feedback. A community-driven process that draws on local knowledge and connections will help ensure a more robust and successful planning process. During the PREP phase, the applicant should consider the planning-area boundaries, especially if/how it might be beneficial to reduce complexity and/or to expand boundaries to include surface-water catchments.

The review team also encourages the applicants to more fully consider surface water and instream needs in integrated planning work. As the group considers PBWP, the ART cautions the applicants against beginning with pre-determined solutions, and instead recommends allowing the planning steps to guide their work to develop solutions collaboratively. In addition, the review team suggests delaying the development of a StoryMap until more participants are involved, ensuring that the final product reflects broader community input.

Inland Rogue Water Resiliency Group

Recommended for Funding

Application Information

Applicant Name: Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District

Counties: Jackson, Josephine

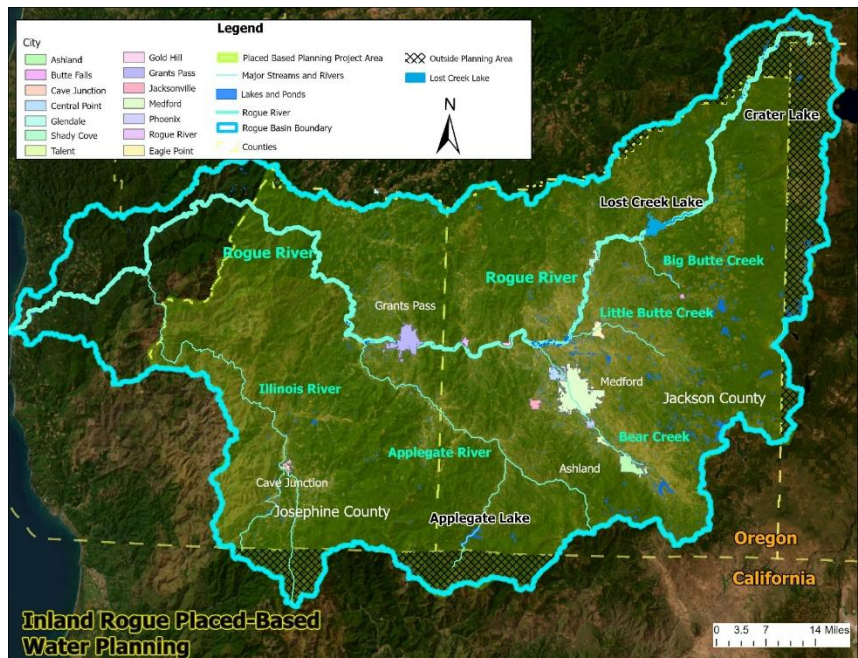
Grant Type: Plan Development

Funding Requested: \$449,993

Conveners: Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District and the Rogue River Watershed Council

Proposed Grant Completion:
December 31, 2030

Proposed Planning Area: 4,170 square miles



Evaluation Summary

The review team indicated that this application has a high likelihood of achieving meaningful outcomes through the place-based water planning process. They appreciated the work that the Inland Rogue Water Resiliency Group has already done to prepare for PBWP, and the applicant's strong track record of partnership in the region. The group displays strong organizational readiness, with a commitment to neutral facilitation and engagement of diverse interests. The group also displays strong technical readiness, supported by an extensive list of locally-developed resources, a literature review, and multiple fish recovery and water quality plans.

The review team appreciated that PBWP would represent an impactful investment in an underserved region that has significant water challenges. The applicants show commitment to effective public and Tribal engagement and to lowering barriers to participation by offering meeting stipends and providing virtual and in-person meeting options.

The review team recommends funding the application as proposed.

Harney Community-Based Water Planning Collaborative

Recommended for Funding

Application Information

Applicant Name: Harney County Watershed Council, Inc.

Counties: Harney

Grant Type: Post-Plan Coordination

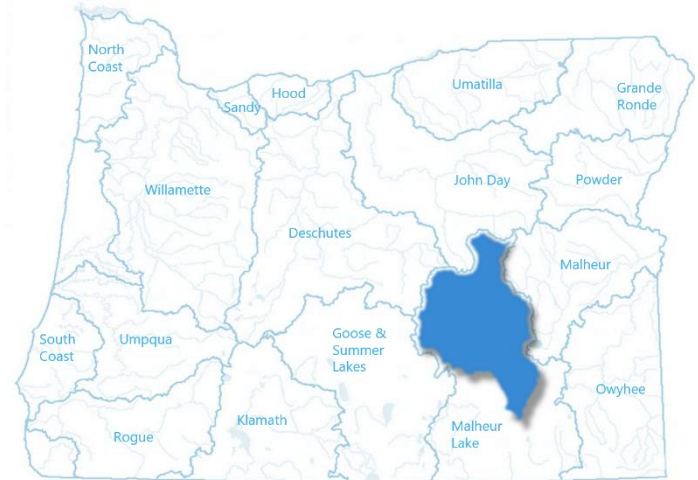
Funding Requested: \$150,000

Convener: Harney County Watershed Council

Proposed Grant Completion: August 31, 2028

State Recognition of Place-Based Water Plan:
September 2025

[Link to State-Recognized Plan](#)



Evaluation Summary

The review team appreciated the need for adaptive planning in this basin, given the changing regulatory landscape over the past year. As a new convener, the High Desert Partnership has a strong reputation in the community and proven track record of effective collaboration. Other application strengths included strong letters of support, and more intentional touch points with the Burns-Paiute Tribe.

Reviewers were concerned that the application proposes meaningful changes to plan strategies without discussion and agreement from all Planning Collaborative participants. The review team expressed concerns that outreach efforts to Planning Collaborative members during grant application development were inadequate. There were also concerns about limited efforts to invite new participation moving forward. Some reviewers noted the removal of a virtual option for meetings could limit participation and transparency, especially for a large planning area.

Reviewers also observed inconsistencies in the identification of the convener. In one section, the application lists the Harney County Watershed Council as the convener, while elsewhere it describes the High Desert Partnership as the convener. Additional details on the budget, tasks, and deliverables would have improved the clarity of the application.

Despite the considerations described above, the review team recognized the value of the proposal and recommends funding the application. If the Director awards the funds, the review team strongly encourages the applicants to clarify convener roles, strengthen alignment with the state-recognized plan and ensure that any changes to plan strategies occur through discussion and agreement with all Planning Collaborative participants. The review team also recommends the applicant provide balanced attention to both groundwater and surface water strategies, improve outreach efforts, including engaging individuals previously involved in planning and expanding participation among new or underrepresented stakeholders, and consider restoring a virtual meeting option to support transparency and accessibility.

Lower John Day Place-Based Partnership

Recommended for Funding

Application Information

Applicant Name: Gilliam Soil and Water Conservation District

Counties: Gilliam, Sherman, Wheeler

Grant Type: Post-Plan Coordination

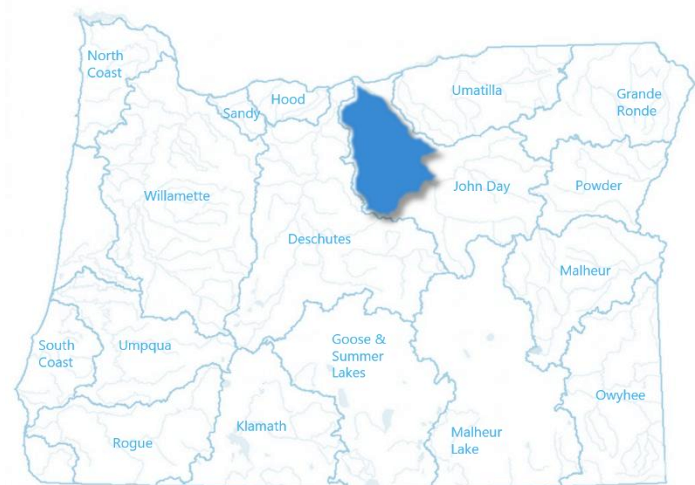
Funding Requested: \$150,000

Conveners: Gilliam Soil and Water Conservation District and Mid John Day Watershed Council

Proposed Grant Completion: December 31, 2028

State Recognition of Place-Based Water Plan: June 2022

[Link to State-Recognized Plan](#)



Evaluation Summary

The review team appreciated the applicant's strong track record of plan implementation and addressing a balance of instream and out-of-stream needs. The applicant continues to have strong leadership and commitment from organizations involved in plan development. The review team also identified the group's project tracker and hands-on approach to reducing participation barriers as application strengths.

The review team recommends funding the application as proposed. If the Director awards the funds, the review team offers the following feedback. While the review team appreciates the limited resources and population in the area, they indicated that the Partnership could benefit from recruiting additional members.

Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership

Recommended for Funding

Application Information

Applicant Name: Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District

Counties: Lincoln

Grant Type: Post-Plan Coordination

Funding Requested: \$148,653

Conveners: Tyler Clouse (Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District) and Adam Denlinger

Proposed Grant Completion: January 4, 2029

State Recognition of Place-Based Water Plan:
June 2022

[Link to State-Recognized Plan](#)



Evaluation Summary

The review team appreciated the commitment of the Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership (MCWPP) leadership and participants to continue to meet despite funding challenges. Reviewers identified several strengths of the application, including an updated charter, the representation of both instream and out-of-stream water interests, the commitment to implementing projects identified during their prioritization process, and the Partnership's proposed approach to outreach.

The review team recommends funding the application as proposed. If the Director awards the funds, the review team offers the following feedback. The Partnership is encouraged to consider reducing participation barriers and increasing engagement through Spanish translation of outreach materials. While the review team understood and appreciated the strong focus on source water protection, they also would have liked to see more information about how other strategy areas might be implemented.