



Attention: OWEB Grant Committee

RE: OWEB Capacity Funding

First of all my sincere apology for not getting comments to you earlier. I have been involved with a range of legislative bills and several hearings over the last week and just was able to read Courtney's letter regarding capacity.

The 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts in our membership are very grateful for the funds we receive from OWEB through ODA to provide for both the general capacity and the capacity for the water quality work districts are additionally providing. We report to ODA through a specific process to assure the work is being accomplished for which funds are provided.

Those dollars help us to leverage significant dollars to secure additional funds to develop projects for restoration, to benefit water quality, and to provide essential technical services to the constituents in our districts.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to meeting in person in April at the OWEB meeting.

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## SHAFF Courtney \* OWEB

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**From:** Kelly Timchak <kelly@currywatersheds.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 13, 2023 11:22 AM  
**To:** SHAFF Courtney \* OWEB  
**Subject:** CS grants  
**Attachments:** OWEB\_CS\_LRWC.docx

Greetings!

I have some concerns about some comments I thought I heard at the most recent OWEB Board meetings regarding Watershed Councils not "leveraging dollars." It is my opinion that watershed councils are increasingly becoming more creative in how to spread dollars even further. We create unique partnerships, think outside the box, and exist in a lean fashion (often many of us do not even have fringe benefits, but are trying to be better about that).

Here is something I put together, but I am more than happy to give more specific examples. Let me know if you would like to see something else, or additions to any of this information. These dollars are vital to our very existence.

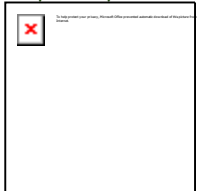
Thanks!  
Kelly

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*We believe that healthy, diverse landscapes lead to healthy communities.*

The Lower Rogue Watershed Council came to existence in 1994 and has been in good standing with OWEB since then. Our council dollars are constantly being leveraged, and I would say we have gotten even better at that over the last 10 years.

As you may know, capacity dollars are highly sought after, and seem to be in even shorter supply now than they have ever been. These important dollars are used to gain federal dollars and foundational dollars to be used for on-the-ground restoration. You will see in the chart below, but our council capacity grant makes up on 16% of our total grant awards. If we did not have this grant, it is unlikely that we would be able to secure all the other grants. We often match staff time and Project Management dollars out of this grant, and are currently looking at restructuring how we use these dollars to make the grant go even farther for the most people/good of the organization.

Not only do these dollars put critical, prioritized projects on the ground, they also pay for many other items that are often hard to secure with other grant funds. We work with the Curry SWCD, but do not have a tax base, so everything we do is grant funded. We use these funds for job development, DEI training, workshops, continuing education, grant writing, relationship development with agencies and foundations, organizational strategic planning, community outreach (tied to restoration), and filling gaps in monitoring.

I cannot imagine a world in which watershed councils do not exist in Oregon, but this would be the reality for many councils without this support. These dollars are vital to putting work on the ground, and even more so with the additional qualifications and research required with new OWEB grants. Grant applications for restoration, TA, and monitoring have become increasingly technical over the last 8 years. These council capacity dollars are often used to interpret climate data, existing water rights data, fisheries indices data, community voices and needs, and so much more. Please continue to fund watershed councils as the community conveners. We are the table at which everyone sits and has a voice. The investment is worth the return, in my humble opinion.

