

## **September 15-16, 2009 OWEB Board Meeting Executive Director Update #C-7: Deschutes SIP Progress Report**

### **Background**

In January of 2008, the Board approved the allocation of \$4 million for the Deschutes Special Investment Partnership (SIP). The Deschutes SIP came from the collaboration around reintroduction of anadromous fish above the Pelton-Round Butte dam complex. The integration of land, water, and habitat conservation interests is well developed in the Deschutes Basin. The settlement to reintroduce steelhead and salmon above the dams provided an opportunity to develop a shared vision for the upper basin.

The Deschutes SIP partners include:

- Crooked River Watershed Council
- Deschutes Land Trust
- Deschutes River Conservancy
- Upper Deschutes Watershed Council

The partners, in cooperation with the natural resource agencies, developed a list of projects that would ensure that reintroduction of anadromous fish could be successful. The advisors to the partners include the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, and staff from the U.S. Forest Service. This group of advisors provides oversight to the program.

### **Progress to Date**

The Deschutes SIP partners have initiated significant work in the Upper Deschutes. They have been able to utilize all of the funding available from OWEB in the year and a half since approval of the program. Major accomplishments are highlighted in a report to the Board that has been prepared as a separate document and that will be made available at the Board meeting. The report indicates that significant progress has been made and additional efforts are sufficiently planned to advance the partnership objectives in the coming years. The partners have been able to focus their efforts and have shown the ability to implement restoration and habitat protection projects on an accelerated schedule.

### **Lessons Learned**

In discussions with the partners and their advisors, the Deschutes SIP process appears to work well as it is currently structured. The following lessons have emerged from the experience of the previous year and a half:

1. It is important to have a mix of funding (capital and non-capital) to ensure project development and design is able to support implementation.
2. OWEB has discussed the partnership with two private foundations, encouraging them to participate in a formal manner. To date they have participated through the support of the partners. Additional efforts to engage private foundations in a programmatic relationship will be important.
3. Development of a coordinated outreach program will be very important for the continuation of the SIP.

Staff will present the Deschutes SIP Biennial Report to the Board at the meeting. A presentation by the Deschutes partners could be arranged in the future.

**Staff Contact**

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