

September 15-16, 2009 OWEB Board Meeting Executive Director Update #C-8: Partnership Report

Background

Over the years, OWEB has developed a number of partnerships to invest in specific ecological outcomes and effectively leverage OWEB funding. Because the partnership projects undergo different review processes, the Board last year formed the Partnership Investment Subcommittee to provide greater focus on these investment areas. The Subcommittee meets periodically to review the status of existing partnership projects and to review potential new ideas and proposals before they are introduced to the full Board. This report lists the current partnerships and identifies the issues facing the Subcommittee.

Current Partnerships

OWEB currently supports three active partnerships and two active Special Investment Partnerships (SIP). While similar, the Subcommittee views partnerships differently than SIP. The primary characteristics of partnership investments are that they include specific ecological objectives, specific partner roles and responsibilities, significant matching of OWEB funds, and alternative solicitation and review processes. All partnership investments maintain OWEB fiscal controls, strong technical review criteria, and enforceable agreements. A SIP is a tool that OWEB may elect to use in situations where an important and extremely beneficial project or group of related projects requires a different staff interaction or funding mechanism.

The partnership investments, partners, and 2007-2009 funding from OWEB are listed in the following table:

Partnership	Partner(s)	OWEB funding 2007-2009	Ecological Objective	Status
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	Farm Service Agency ODF and WRD NRCS SWCDs others	\$4,500,000	Riparian restoration in agricultural landscapes	ongoing
Whole Watershed Restoration Initiative	U.S. Forest Service National Marine Fisheries Service Ecotrust	\$500,000	Restore "focus watersheds" within "priority basins"	ongoing
Oregon 150	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$1,000,000	Enhance Oregon symbolic species	completed
Deschutes SIP	Upper Deschutes WC Crooked River WC Deschutes River Conservancy Deschutes Land Conservancy others	\$4,000,000	Restore flows and habitat for the reintroduction of anadromous fish above the Pelton-Round Butte dam complex on the Deschutes River.	ongoing
Willamette SIP	Meyer Memorial Trust others	\$6,000,000	Restore channel complexity and floodplain connection to the mainstem Willamette River.	ongoing

Additional Interest

There is broad interest and excitement about the targeted approach of the Special Investment Partnership efforts of OWEB. Staff have been approached to discuss potential new partnerships in the Lower John Day, Sandy River, Siuslaw River, and Klamath River basins. The Flow Conservation Work Group (see Agenda Item #C-4) has recommended that staff consider a partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to evaluate and fund water conservation projects.

Partnership Issues

The Partnership Subcommittee will meet August 26, 2009, to consider OWEB's existing partnerships and potential partnerships. The primary issue raised by the increased level of interest in new partnerships is financial with a 25 percent reduction in the 2009-2011 capital budget compared to the previous biennium. The Subcommittee and Board will be faced with the challenge of determining its partnership priorities as well as balancing its investment portfolio between regular grants and partnerships. The results of the Subcommittee's meeting will be presented and discussed in the context of the 2009-2011 Spending Plan (Agenda Item I).

Staff Contact

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