

Projects Recommended for Funding Access and Habitat Board

The Access and Habitat (A&H) Board met in Salem on January 25, 2010, to review 16 projects requesting funding from the A&H Program. A project must receive at least four supporting votes to be recommended for funding; all seven Board members attended the meeting. A summary of each project, funding requested, access provided, and Board and Council votes are listed below. Major issues raised are identified below, if applicable.

The Board recommends funding the following projects:

#2010-01 Forsea Ranch Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$112,950
- Cooperator Funds: \$2,500 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$115,450
- Applicant: Dan L. Forsea & Sons Inc.
- Location: Grand Ronde Watershed District
- Access Period: April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2015
- Access Acres: 9,329
- Cooperators: Dan L. Forsea & Sons Inc.
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Forsea Ranch Access Area would provide year-round public hunting access to 9,329 acres of private land on a “welcome to hunt” basis for a total of five years. In return, the A&H Program would pay the landowner \$2.40 per acre for each of the five years, for a total access payment of \$111,950. An additional \$1,000 would be spent on gates to alleviate chronic trespass issues, for a total A & H Grant request of \$112,950.

The Forsea Ranch Access Area has been enrolled in the A&H program since 2003 and has proven to be one of the program’s highest quality access properties for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, mule deer, elk, bear, cougar, and upland game birds. The project site is located in the Lookout Mountain Wildlife Management Unit, which has been identified as the highest priority area for ODFW Baker District staff to maintain or open private land for public hunting access.

#2010-02 Widman Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$84,300
- Cooperator Funds: \$2,500 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$86,800
- Applicant: Widman Ranch
- Location: Grand Ronde Watershed District
- Access Period: August 1 – December 1, 2010 - 2014
- Access Acres: 8,430
- Cooperators: Widman Ranch

- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Widman Access Area would provide five years of open public hunting access to 8,430 acres from August 1 to December 1. The A&H Program would reimburse the landowner \$2.00 per acre for each of the five years.

The Widman Access Area was enrolled in the A&H Program in 2008 and both the landowner and ODFW staff have been satisfied with hunter use and satisfaction. The Widman property is located in the Lookout Mountain Unit less than 10 miles from the Forsea Access Area, and has provided great pronghorn and mule deer hunting opportunities in a unit with 66% private land. Elk, upland birds, and predators can also be found on the property.

#2010-03 Lost Valley Ranch RHA

- A&H Funds: \$76,030
- Cooperator Funds: \$39,095
- Total Project Cost: \$115,125
- Applicant: Lost Valley Ranch
- Location: John Day Watershed District
- Access Period: August 1 – January 31, 2010 - 2015
- Access Acres: 6,336
- Cooperators: Lost Valley Ranch, Oregon State Police, ODFW- Heppner
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The proposed project would provide open public hunting on 6,336 acres of private land from August 1 to January 31 for a total of five years. The A&H payment to the landowner would be \$2.40 per acre for each of the five years. In addition, ODFW – Heppner District and Oregon State Police would contribute \$36,595 in administration, implementation, and enforcement of the project. Lost Valley Ranch would contribute \$2,500 (in-kind) for hunting administration.

The Lost Valley Ranch was first enrolled in A&H for the 2009 hunting season, and has successfully met both project objectives of reducing chronic wildlife damage and providing a good public hunting opportunity. The property is located in the Fossil Wildlife Management Unit, which is 86 percent private land offering little public hunting. The RHA has provided opportunities to hunt deer, elk, pronghorn, turkey, upland birds, small game, and predators.

#2010-04 Owsley Canyon Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$4,350
- Cooperator Funds: \$2,500 (hunting administration; in-kind)

- Total Project Cost: \$6,850
- Applicant: Don Shaw
- Location: Grand Ronde Watershed District
- Access Period: April 1 – December 31, 2010 - 2014
- Access Acres: 435
- Cooperators: Don Shaw
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Owsley Canyon Access Area first enrolled in the A&H Program in 2009. The current proposal would provide five years of open public hunting access to 435 acres of private land during the access period of April 1 through December 31. The A&H Program would reimburse the landowner \$2.00 per acre for each of the five years.

Located in the eastern portion of the Mt. Emily Wildlife Management Unit, the Shaw Family Ranch supports mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, cougar, bear, turkey, pheasant, Hungarian partridge, California quail, and blue and ruffed grouse. Because of its close proximity to the town of La Grande, the Owsley Canyon Access Area would provide great youth hunting opportunities. The project would also help ODFW - Union Wildlife District control an elk population that causes chronic damage to agricultural lands in the Grande Ronde Valley.

#2010-05 Smutz Access Project

- A&H Funds: \$17,675
- Cooperator Funds: \$2,500 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$20,175
- Applicant: Irwin Smutz
- Location: Grande Ronde Watershed District
- Access Period: April 1 – December 31, 2010 - 2014
- Access Acres: 1,414
- Cooperators: Irwin Smutz
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Smutz Access Project would provide continued public hunting access to 1,414 acres of private land within the Glass Hill Access Area. Access would be provided on a “welcome to hunt basis” during the access period of April 1 – December 31, for a total of five years. The landowner would be paid \$2.50 per acre for each year of enrollment.

In August 2008, the Smutz property was added to adjacent A&H lands (including Glass Hill Conservancy, Forest Capitol LLC, and RMEF Glass Hill properties) to create the Glass Hill Access Area. Located in the Starkey Wildlife Management Unit, this project (as well as adjoining Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area) provides opportunities to hunt mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, bear, cougar, coyote, turkey, waterfowl, pheasant, Hungarian partridge, California quail, and blue and ruffed grouse.

#2010-06 Rufenacht Land and Cattle Co. Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$56,720
- Cooperator Funds: \$2,500 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$59,220
- Applicant: Rufenacht Land & Cattle Co.
- Location: Grand Ronde Watershed District
- Access Period: August 1, 2010 – July 31, 2015
- Access Acres: 4,727
- Cooperators: Rufenacht Land & Cattle Co.
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 4; No: 2

The Rufenacht Land and Cattle Co. Access Area would provide open public hunting access to 4,727 acres of private land on a year-round basis for five years. The A&H Program would reimburse the landowner \$2.40 per acre for each year of access.

The Rufenacht property has been enrolled in A&H since 2009 and is located in the Sumpter Wildlife Management Unit, which contains 65 percent private lands. The access area provides opportunities to hunt mule deer, pronghorn, Rocky Mountain elk, turkey, upland birds, and predators, and helps to alleviate chronic elk damage through established cow hunts. The project also improves hunter access to the 8,000-acre Foster Ranch and 1,000-acre Copley Ranch, currently enrolled in A&H as “by-permission” properties.

There were two dissenting votes. One concerned expressed was that the adjoining A&H properties were scheduled to expire in 2010. However, the information provided in the application was incorrect; the Foster Ranch will provide public hunting access until December 2019. Additional habitat work which resulted in a contract extension contributed to the confusion regarding end date.

#2010-07 Bloomer Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$16,344
- Cooperator Funds: \$1,500 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$17,844
- Applicant: Gary Bloomer
- Location: Grand Ronde Watershed District
- Access Period: August 1 – January 31, 2010 - 2013
- Access Acres: 2,724
- Cooperators: Gary Bloomer
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Bloomer Access Area was first enrolled in A&H Program for the 2009 hunting season. The current proposal would provide an additional three years of open public hunting access to 2,724 acre of private land during the access period of August 1 - January 31. The A&H Program would reimburse the landowner \$2.00 per acre for each year of access.

The Bloomer Access Area is located in the southern portion of the Sumpter Wildlife Management Unit, which contains 75 percent private land and has historically been prone to elk damage. A long cow season is in place to address the damage, and increased public access would help to achieve the goals of this management effort. The property supports elk, mule deer, and upland game birds and provides access to 120 acres of previously land-locked public land.

#2010-08 Imnaha River Canyon Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$36,247
- Cooperator Funds: \$36,500
- Total Project Cost: \$72,747
- Applicant: The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and ODFW - Enterprise
- Location: Grande Ronde Watershed District
- Access Period: August 1, 2010 – July 31, 2012
- Access Acres: 6,673
- Habitat Acres: 1,000
- Cooperators: TNC, U.S. Forest Service, Wallowa Resources, ODFW
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

Added to the A&H Program in 2009, the Imnaha River Canyon Access Area provides open public hunting access to 6,673 acres of private (TNC) property on a year-round basis. The current proposal would maintain this access for two additional years by providing one ODFW technician to patrol the area and facilitate habitat projects for three months each year. The total cost for six months' salary and vehicle fuel would be \$32,247. Additionally, \$4,000 of A&H funds would be used to construct a parking area at an access point near Cow Creek that was heavily used during the 2009 hunting seasons.

The Imnaha River Canyon Access area is comprised of 27 parcels of TNC property located on the lower Imnaha River, primarily in the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA). These parcels significantly improve access to approximately 45,000 acres of public land. The property provides excellent opportunities to hunt mule deer, white-tailed deer, Rocky Mountain elk, Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, turkey, waterfowl, upland birds, and predators.

In addition to reducing wildlife and road closure violations, the ODFW technician would collect biological data related to hunter harvest and help coordinate wildlife

habitat improvement projects including spring development and repair, fence removal, noxious weed inventory, and litter and trash removal. Wallowa Resources will conduct weed removal and reseeding projects on the area, and the US Forest Service will implement controlled burns. TNC will provide volunteers for fence removal.

#2010-09 Troy Ranches Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$11,547
- Cooperator Funds: \$500 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$12,047
- Applicant: Troy Ranches
- Location: Grand Ronde Watershed District
- Access Period: August 1, 2010 – January 31, 2011
- Access Acres: 5,696 (private); 1,797 (public)
- Cooperators: Troy Ranches
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Troy Ranches Access Area would provide open public hunting access to 5,696 acres of private land and 1,797 acres of currently inaccessible (land-locked) public land from August 1, 2010 to January 31, 2011. The landowner would be paid \$1.80 per acre for the private land and \$0.72 per acre for the land-locked public land. Because this would be a new A&H project, the landowner would like to try it for one year before committing to a longer term.

The proposed project area is located in both the Sumpter and Lookout Mountain Wildlife Management Units, and provides opportunities to hunt mule deer, Rocky Mountain elk, pronghorn, upland birds, and predators. Lack of access to private lands in the Lookout Mountain unit has forced ODFW – Baker District staff to maintain static elk and pronghorn tag numbers, despite recent population increases. Additional A&H enrollment in this unit could lead to an increase in tag allocation.

#2010-10 Jenkins Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$165,415
- Cooperator Funds: \$1,000 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$166,415
- Applicant: Jenkins Ranch
- Location: Malheur Watershed District
- Access Period: August 1 – March 1, 2010 - 2015
- Access Acres: 13,233
- Cooperators: Jenkins Ranch
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Jenkins Access Area would provide open public hunting access to 13,233 acres of private land during the access period of August 1 to March 1, for a total of five years. In return, the landowner would be paid \$2.50 per acre for each of the five years.

The Jenkins Access Project was added to the A&H Program in August 2008 and has proven to be a success for the landowner and hunters alike. Located in the Steens Mountain Wildlife Management Unit, the property provides excellent mule deer, elk, pronghorn and sage grouse hunting. In addition to the private land access this project provides, it also opens a road that significantly improves access to 60,000 acres of BLM land.

#2010-11 Palomino Butte Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$54,714
- Cooperator Funds: \$600 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$55,314
- Applicant: William Peila
- Location: Malheur Watershed
- Access Period: August 1 – March 1, 2010 - 2013
- Access Acres: 7,343 (private); 640 (public)
- Cooperators: William Peila
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Palomino Butte Access Area would provide three years of open public hunting access to 7,343 acres of private land and 640 acres of land-locked public land during the access period of August 1 – March 1. The landowner would be paid \$2.40 per acre for the private land and \$0.96 per acre for the public land, for each year of enrollment.

Located in the Juniper Wildlife Management Unit, the Palomino Butte Access Area was added to the A&H Program in 2009. The property has been known for its high quality mule deer, antelope, elk, sage grouse, and coyote hunting. A long-duration elk hunt has been established to alleviate chronic big game damage; continuation of this project would help achieve the objectives of the damage hunt. In addition to providing new access to 640 acres of land-locked public land, the project would also improve current access to 7,656 acres of public land.

#2010-12 Bentz Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$10,000
- Cooperator Funds: \$1,000 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$11,000

- Applicant: Mike Bentz
- Location: Malheur Watershed
- Access Period: August 1 – March 31, 2010 - 2012
- Access Acres: 400 (private); >10,000 (public)
- Cooperators: Mike Bentz
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Bentz Access Area would provide open public hunting access to 400 acres of private land and significantly improve access to over 10,000 acres of land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The access period would be from August 1 to March 31; access would be provided for two years. This project has been enrolled in A&H since 2005, and the landowner has requested the same payment of \$5,000 per year.

The Bentz Access Area serves as the primary public access point to Hunter Creek confluence and the Malheur River in this portion of the drainage. Surrounding public lands have historically been difficult to access, but provide a variety of big game and game bird hunting opportunities. The private land offers excellent upland bird hunting, as well as big game opportunities.

The project was originally proposed for a 5-year duration. The A&H Board requested that ODFW staff work with the landowner toward the pursuit of a permanent easement securing access to the adjoining BLM land. The Board approved the project for two years of funding to provide time to investigate options for a long term easement agreement.

#2010-13 McBride Access Area

- A&H Funds: \$101,000
- Cooperator Funds: \$1,000 (hunting administration; in-kind)
- Total Project Cost: \$102,000
- Applicant: F. LeRoy McBride
- Location: Malheur Watershed District
- Access Period: August 1, 2010 – July 31, 2014
- Access Acres: 10,100
- Cooperators: F. LeRoy McBride
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The McBride Access Area would provide five years of open public hunting access to 10,100 acres of private land on a year-round basis. The Access and Habitat Program would reimburse the landowner \$2.00 per acre for each of the five years.

This access area was added to the A&H Program in 2005. In addition to the 10,100 acres of private land, the project also improves access to 14,000 acres of public hunting

ground. The McBride Ranch supports good populations of mule deer, pronghorn, upland birds, and ground squirrels, but the major hunting opportunity provided is for ground squirrels. Squirrel hunting opportunities are very limited, and this project has supported many youth and family use days.

#2010-14 High Desert Project Assistant

- A&H Funds: \$5,856
- Cooperator Funds: \$1,730
- Total Project Cost: \$7,586
- Applicant: Dan Gonzalez, ODFW – Malheur District
- Location: Malheur Watershed District
- Cooperators: ODFW – Malheur District
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The High Desert Project Assistant proposal requests \$5,856 in A&H funding for a seasonal ODFW employee to help fulfill contractual obligations to post/maintain signs and patrol A&H access properties in Harney and Malheur Counties. Several access areas have been added to this region over the past five years; there are currently 18 “Welcome to Hunt” properties that require regular maintenance. Many of these properties are scattered and remote, separated by large blocks of public land.

The Malheur Regional A&H Coordinator is unable to properly maintain these access areas and also comply with other District duties. The project assistant position was funded by A&H for this region in 2007. The requested funding would provide two months’ salary for the 2010/2011 hunting season. ODFW – Malheur District would contribute \$1,730 in vehicle and fuel costs.

#2010-15 Sutherlin Access Project

- A&H Funds: \$2,715
- Cooperator Funds: \$15,000
- Total Project Cost: \$17,715
- Applicant: Weyerhaeuser Company
- Location: Umpqua Watershed District
- Access Duration: January – February, 2011, 2012, 2013
- Access Acres: 89,600
- Cooperators: Weyerhaeuser Company, ODFW – Umpqua District
- Council Vote: Yes: 7; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Sutherlin Access Project would provide 80 hunters (40 youth and 40 adults) access to previously closed private timber lands during two controlled antlerless elk hunts on Weyerhaeuser’s Calapooya Tree Farm and RFP’s Hinkle Creek watershed. Successfully drawn applicants will receive a map, entry permit, and a key to access these two areas,

which total 89,600 acres. A total of \$2,715 in A&H funds would be used to purchase signs, maps, permits, locks, and keys in return for 3 years of hunting access. Weyerhaeuser would produce updated maps and provide security patrols and project monitoring. ODFW – Umpqua District would maintain the hunter database and distribute keys, maps, and parking permits.

The Sutherlin Access Project was added to the A&H Program for the 2009 hunting season. The properties hold good numbers of elk, and have consistently experienced elk damage to tree seedlings. Since 2003, controlled hunts have replaced emergency hunts as the primary damage mitigation tool. The proposed project would provide hunter access without requiring staff at entry gates.

#2010-16 Territorial Youth Deer Hunt

- A&H Funds: \$7,944
- Cooperator Funds: \$3,996
- Total Project Cost: \$11,940
- Applicant: Guistina Resources
- Location: Umpqua Watershed District
- Access Duration: Each weekend in November: 2010, 2011, 2012
- Access Acres: 4,477
- Cooperators: Guistina Resources, ODFW – Umpqua District
- Council Vote: Yes: 7; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Territorial Youth Deer Hunt project would provide access for 10 youth deer hunters to 4,477 acres of quality private timber land through the controlled hunt process. The hunt would be specific to black-tailed deer during weekends in November. The total A&H payment of \$7,944 includes access payments, security patrols, and permits for three years of access. ODFW – Umpqua District and Guistina would also contribute to the cost of security; Guistina would provide project administration.

The Territorial Youth Deer Hunt project was added to the A&H Program for the 2009 hunting season, and provided 100% hunter success for the 10 youth hunters that drew a 2009 tag. Spotlight surveys on the property indicate good numbers of black-tailed bucks and good fawn recruitment, as the animals take advantage of the abundant forage found within the logged units.