

Projects Recommended for Funding

The Access and Habitat (A&H) Board met in Salem on July 20, 2010 to review three 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, designation as access and/or habitat project, and Board and Council votes are listed below. Major issues raised are identified below, if applicable.

The Board recommends funding the following projects:

#2010-23 Star 1 Trust Continuation Project

- A&H Funds: \$10,612
- Cooperator Funds: \$14,964
- Total Project Cost: \$25,576
- Applicant: Dale Ackler
- Location: Deschutes Watershed District
Grizzly WMU (28% public)
- Habitat Acres: 70
- Access Acres: 920, by-permission
- Access Duration: 2 years: September 2010 – January 2012
- Cooperators: Dale Ackler, ODFW - Ochoco District, Oregon Hunters Association – Prineville Chapter
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Star 1 Trust Continuation Project would develop three spring sites to provide year-round free standing water for wildlife, helping to distribute concentrations of deer and elk that cause significant agricultural damage on lower elevation farmlands. The project would also replace 65 acres of cheat grass with a diversity of grasses and forbs, and provide two years of hunting access to 920 acres for disabled hunters including participants of the military's "Wounded Warriors" program.

Proposed activities would build upon an A&H project implemented in 2007 that included juniper removal, medusa head eradication, water developments, livestock fencing, riparian and upland plantings, road improvements, and construction of handicapped-accessible hunting blinds.

#2010-24 Bennett Upland Enhancement Project

- A&H Funds: \$3,960
- Cooperator Funds: \$6,245
- Total Project Cost: \$10,205
- Applicant: Goose Lake Fishes Working Group

- Location: Klamath Watershed District
Interstate WMU (56% public)
- Habitat Acres: 80
- Access Acres: 370, by-permission
- Access Duration: 5 years: September 2010 – March 2015
- Cooperators: L.D. Bennett (Landowner), Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), Goose Lake Watershed Council
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Bennett Upland Enhancement Project would remove 80 acres of phase-two juniper on designated mule deer winter range. Juniper treatment will improve forage for wintering mule deer, improve water flow to emerging springs on the property, reduce fire fuels, and maintain a healthy shrub understory. The landowner would provide five years of by-permission hunting access to the 370-acre project area.

The landowner has made a concerted effort over the last five years to treat juniper on his property, clearing 100 acres on his own and another 190 through an OWEB/A&H grant in 2007. The proposed project would complete eradication of juniper from the entire property, and includes a diligent post-treatment plan to be implemented by the landowner and the Goose Lake Watershed Council.

#2010-25 Sullivan Z Ranch Habitat Improvement

- A&H Funds: \$50,000
- Cooperator Funds: \$2,878,000
- Total Project Cost: \$2,928,000
- Applicant: Sullivan Z Ranches
- Location: Grande Ronde Watershed District
Sumpter WMU (45% public)
- Habitat Acres: >20,000 total
- Access Acres: 9,600 by-permission
- Access Duration: 2 years: September 2010 – December 2011
- Cooperators: Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Baker County SWCD, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), ODFW – Baker District, Landowners
- Council Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0
- Board Vote: Yes: 6; No: 0

The Sullivan Z Ranch Habitat Improvement project is a landscape-scale cooperative effort to clear over 20,000 acres of western juniper on private, USFS, and BLM lands. A \$50,000 A&H grant would be used to hand-fall juniper on 720 acres of private land (Sullivan Z Ranch); cooperator funds would be used for juniper treatment on both public

and adjacent private lands. The project area supports very high densities of wintering Rocky Mountain elk and mule deer, as well as healthy populations of upland game birds (including sage grouse) and turkeys. Juniper removal will benefit all wildlife species and is a key strategy to the recovery of both mule deer and sage grouse.

Public access to the Sullivan property would be provided for two years on a registration-basis, where hunters would be required to check in at the Baker ODFW District Office. This would allow district staff to distribute maps and regulations and to quantify hunter use. The first phase of this project cleared 864 acres of juniper on the property using an A&H/Upland Bird Stamp Program grant in 2009.