

## **OCS Chapter 9. Conservation Toolbox**

- **Outreach, Education, and Engagement**
- **Appendix 1: Existing Planning and Regulatory Framework**
- **Appendix 2: Guide to Voluntary Conservation Programs**
- **General References**

### **Outreach, Education, and Engagement**

Connecting people to nature is an important element of successful Conservation Strategy implementation. Acquiring the knowledge, skills and motives to conserve Oregon's native fish and wildlife empowers people to work together to take strategic actions for the benefit of current and future generations. Fostering broad participation in conservation will be critical to maintain Oregon's fish, wildlife and habitats.

Ways to engage Oregonians in conservation include:

**Strategy Outreach** – telling people about the Strategy's goals, voluntary approach, and opportunities

**Conservation Education** – provide opportunities for people to learn about their natural environment

**Fish and Wildlife-based Tourism** – support existing and expand sustainable fish and wildlife-based recreation to increase support for fish and wildlife conservation and to support local economies. Support hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing

**Human Dimensions Research** – learn more about Oregonian's attitudes toward conservation, how to foster more public involvement in conservation and how to best support and incentivize landowners in voluntary conservation.

### **Oregon Conservation Strategy Outreach and Education**

According to the [North American Association of Environmental Education](#), conservation education should foster clear awareness of conservation issues; provide opportunities to acquire knowledge and skill. The results can deepen commitment and create new patterns of behavior. Many current education programs focus on building awareness, but knowledge and awareness of issues are just the first two steps. Conservation education programs need to serve all age levels and include tangible action items to model behavior. Ideally, conservation education will provide Oregonians with an understanding of the various issues involved with species conservation and natural resource management so they can understand all sides of complex issues and support sound decisions.

Education and outreach will be most effective when linked strategically to other actions such as land management and habitat conservation, water management, or incentives for private landowners. Successful implementation of this Strategy depends on expanded involvement from a wide variety of people, agencies, and groups across the state. Effective outreach will be needed to share the goals, voluntary approaches, recommended actions, and benefits of habitat conservation to diverse Oregonians and partners. Equally important tasks are listening to input from diverse sources and providing opportunities for meaningful involvement and decision-making. Some important audiences are:

**General public:** Help individuals understand statewide habitat conservation goals in both urban and rural areas, with a focus on locally occurring ecoregions, habitats, and species. Build connections between the diverse communities of Oregon to help support a statewide commitment to conservation of Oregon’s fish, wildlife, and habitats.

**Private landowners, including urban backyards, landowners with a few acres, family farms, forests, ranches, industrial landowners.** Both urban and rural landowners should get recognition for the contributions they are already making to species conservation. Farms, ranches, and forests provide a variety of fish and wildlife habitats, and many rural landowners are actively improving habitat through improved management practices or specific projects. Provide information about these contributions and the connections that all Oregonians have to agricultural and forest landowners who grow the food they eat and the other products they use. Introduce urban Oregonians to diverse products from rural landowners who use certification or marketing programs that support sustainable or habitat-friendly activities. Similarly, recognize positive efforts to address conservation issues and provide habitat within urban areas, such as sustainable building, invasive species control, “[Naturescaping](#)” in backyards, and maintaining natural park networks that support fish and wildlife habitat and improve the quality of life for people.

**Information for communities, local planners, and other organizations with an interest in Oregon’s natural resources:** (See *Strategy Organization section* [\[Insert OCS weblink\]](#))

**Young Oregonians:** The future lies with Oregon’s younger Oregonians, in both K-12 and higher education (colleges and universities). Young people, both in rural and urban areas, need to see good examples of real people integrating ecological and economic values on farms and in forests, and diverse and innovative partnerships for habitat conservation. The more exposure young Oregonians have to real people doing habitat conservation, the more likely they are to support these activities in adulthood. Programs for young people need to include opportunities to participate in habitat conservation projects, whenever possible. Opportunities include working with youth groups, local governments, schools, and service learning programs. This exposes students to different learning opportunities, helps them develop a sense of commitment to their community and local habitats, and may introduce them to possible careers in the field.

There are opportunities to work with educators to provide additional opportunities for teacher training on conservation education curriculum and instructional strategies at no cost to teachers or schools. Classroom-based conservation education programs can be integrated with state academic standards and linked with standards for reading, math and other subjects beyond science.

Research conducted by undergraduate and graduate students can be an important way to address information and monitoring needs for the Conservation Strategy. Colleges and universities are important partners for providing educational, technical expertise, monitoring and research assistance to landowners, Oregonians, agencies, and policy-makers.

**Federal and State Agencies and Other Conservation Partners:** Provide information about the Conservation Strategy and opportunities for coordination. Help diverse agencies and staff understand statewide and ecoregional habitat conservation goals and incorporate them into programs, policies, and

priorities whenever possible. In addition to agencies, there are potential roles for landowners, land managers, non-profit organizations, universities and schools, business owners, local governments, elected officials, planners, consultants, and civic groups. Outreach efforts need to target all potential conservation partners.

### ***Some Ongoing Efforts***

The Conservation Strategy will build on existing efforts to conduct outreach and conservation education, expanding existing efforts partnerships. The following provides some examples of the ongoing efforts by many agencies, schools and organizations in Oregon:

Interpretation presentations and educational programs such as campground talks, nature walks, skills workshops, hunter and angler education programs, games and other children's programs, exhibits.

- Informational signage, brochures, videos and other materials at agency offices, trails, campsites, wildlife refuges and other outdoor recreation sites. For example, see information on native species provided by [ODFW](#)
- School-sponsored learning such as outdoor camps, internships, restoration projects at schools, and classwork. For example, ODFW partnered with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Audubon Society of Portland to lead the school program [Bird by Bird](#).
- Special events such as festivals and camps (ex., Oregon Zoo, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry)..
- Fish and wildlife viewing programs such as whale watching, bird watching, and elk viewing.
- "Living with Urban Wildlife". For example see ODFW's [Living with Wildlife](#), and the [Audubon Society of Portland](#). These programs are focused on reducing human/wildlife conflicts in urban areas.
- Media relationships. For example, see Oregon Public Broadcasting's [Oregon Field Guide](#)
- Booths at county fairs and other community events
- Volunteer programs
- Newsletters. For example see the Oregon Conservation Strategy [e-newsletter](#)
- Citizen science

### ***Opportunities***

There are many opportunities to improve coordination, strategic implementation, and evaluation of conservation education in Oregon. Some recommendations include:

#### ***Build on existing efforts***

- Inventory conservation/environmental education activities currently under way to determine which could help promote the Conservation Strategy.
- Work with local, state and federal parks, wildlife areas, campsites and other recreational programs to enhance interpretation programs
- Enhance effective partnerships with organizations whose primary mission is conservation education (e.g. non-governmental organizations, universities, agencies). Seek new conservation education partners in Oregon.
- Fold Conservation Strategy priorities into the education and outreach activities of federal, state and local natural resource agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other education providers.

#### ***Formal education***

- Support environmental education programs for educators and students K-12

### Marketing and promotion

- Develop education materials about the Conservation Strategy. Produce outreach materials addressing Strategy Species and Habitats, Conservation Opportunity Areas, and conservation actions and issues. Inform people about opportunities to weave conservation goals into ongoing planning, greenspace acquisition and management, neighborhood projects, educational programs, restoration programs and so on.
- Work with media partners to promote the Conservation Strategy and its implementation priorities and create messages which report successes achieved by the Conservation Strategy.
- Produce “virtual tours” of particular areas of the state to promote Strategy Habitats and Species and link to partner websites.

### Incorporate Outreach and Education into Other Voluntary Actions

- Produce informational brochures for landowners on Strategy Species and Habitats (also see the Voluntary Conservation Tools section [\[Insert OCS weblink\]](#)).
- Develop educational tools that complement on-the-ground conservation actions and management for Strategy Species and Habitats.
- Work with the Oregon Invasive Species Council to develop a statewide invasive species awareness campaign, which will assess Conservation Strategy needs for education and marketing. Develop other tools for public participation for preventing introductions of new invasive species to Oregon.

### **Fish and Wildlife-Based Tourism**

Because of the diversity and beauty of its landscape and richness in flora and fauna, Oregon is an outstanding state for outdoor experiences. Fish and wildlife-based tourism can promote conservation through public outreach and support, diversify local economies, and provide rewarding experiences for a variety of people. Oregon’s approach is to support efforts to create and promote sustainable fish and wildlife-based tourism opportunities. In this discussion, the term “wildlife tourism” is refers to recreational activities based on both fish and wildlife use and appreciation.

### **Objectives**

- In collaboration with Travel Oregon and other relevant government agencies, provide strategic direction and leadership on sustainable wildlife watching opportunities, hunting and fishing opportunities, and education in Oregon.
- In cooperation with relevant Oregon government agencies, promote sustainable tourism and tourism-generated economic development (including ‘product’ innovations for visitors) appropriate to Oregon’s regional communities and consistent with the values and principles underlying the Conservation Strategy.
- In association with private industry and government, investigate potential sources of future income generation - resulting from sustainable wildlife tourism development and growth - that will benefit both local communities and the Conservation Strategy’s wider conservation goals.
- In partnership with Travel Oregon, integrate sustainable tourism opportunities, where appropriate, into regional and state-wide programs developed as a result of the Conservation Strategy.

- Where relevant, facilitate greater collaboration and cooperation over wildlife tourism opportunities in Oregon with interested regional and state tourism associations, Oregon’s destination management organizations, tourism industry operators and key stakeholders identified through the Conservation Strategy development process.
- Continue to promote hunting- and fishing-based tourism. Oregon is known for its wide open spaces, rugged landscapes and great hunting and fishing opportunities. Over 16 million acres of public land are open to recreational users, including hunting, fishing, hiking, biking and camping. Hunting and fishing is an outdoor heritage for Oregonians and sportsmen and women continue to support conservation efforts and recovery of both “game” and “non – game” fish and wildlife.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

- Enhancing awareness of the workings and interests of the tourism industry and its relevant opportunity areas amongst the stakeholders, regional organizations and fish and wildlife programs, associated with the Strategy.
- Enhancing awareness of sustainable wildlife-based tourism opportunities and relevant conservation needs, interests and priorities within Oregon’s tourism industry – particularly its nature-based tourism sector.
- Aligning conservation programs and sustainable tourism development needs and opportunities of Oregon and its regions.

### **Value of Fish and Wildlife-based Tourism**

[National recreation surveys](#) in the U.S. have provided useful information on popular activities in the U.S. These surveys provide valuable indicators of Americans’ outdoor recreation activities and their interest in enjoying these activities when visiting different places or destinations.

### **Wildlife tourism - growth and value**

Wildlife viewing can complement camping, hunting and fishing activities, and can be enjoyed year – round by virtually all ages. For example:

- In 2011, nearly a third of the U. S. population participated in wildlife viewing.
- 32 percent of the U. S. population view or photograph birds.
- 52.6 percent view or photograph other wildlife.
- 54.8 percent view or photograph natural scenery.
- In Oregon, 1.2 million residents and nonresidents 16 year old or older participated in wildlife watching.

### **Information sources:**

*U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation National Overview. August 2012] Chapter revised for Oregon January 2014.*

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/economic\\_impact.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/economic_impact.asp)

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/docs/Report\\_5\\_6\\_09--Final%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/docs/Report_5_6_09--Final%20(2).pdf)

<http://digitalmedia.fws.gov/cdm/ref/collection/document/id/859>

Oregon: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/fhw11-or.pdf>

### **Tourism trends**

According to the Travel Industry Association of America, significant travel trends affecting Oregon's tourism industry include:

Oregon's diverse regions – from the coast and mountains, to valleys and deserts – offer a rich variety of outdoor activities for everyone from the extreme sport participants to fishing enthusiasts to the family vacationer.

Recreation and adventure interests and options range from the 'soft' (at the more relaxed, observational and passive end) to the 'hard' (more active and physical with an element of potential 'danger').

- Outdoor recreation and/or visiting national or state parks is one of the top activities for U.S. travelers taking leisure trips within the U.S.
- One in five (21 percent) leisure person-trips includes some form of outdoor recreation and/or a visit to a national or state park.
- Half of all U.S. adults, or 98 million people, have taken an adventure trip in the past five years. This includes 31 million adults who engaged in hard adventure activities like whitewater rafting, scuba diving and mountain biking.
- Camping is the number one outdoor vacation activity in America. One-third of U.S. adults say they have gone on a camping vacation in the past five years. The average age of travelers who go camping is 37 and their median household income is \$43,000.
- One-fifth of U.S. adults attended a festival while on a trip away from home in the past year. One-third of festival travelers attended an arts or music festival in the past year; Twenty-two percent of festival travelers attended an ethnic, folk or heritage festival. Festival attendance often involves camping.

### **Participation rates– fishing and viewing wildlife**

In 2013 there were approximately 259,000 licensed hunters and 617,000 licensed anglers in Oregon. Approximated 243,000 hunters and 493,000 were Oregon residents. Licensed resident hunters make up 8.3 percent of the state population aged 12-69. Licensed resident anglers make up 17.4 percent of the total state population aged 14-69. Although it is difficult to estimate the number of wildlife watchers, for 2011 it was estimated that over 800,000 Oregonians participated in bird watching.

### **Economic contribution**

- Results from surveys conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service showed that Oregon derived \$2.7 billion in revenue from all wildlife-related recreational activities in 2011. Of that amount, Oregonians spent \$1.7 billion
- 1.2 million people participated in wildlife watching in Oregon in 2011.

### **2011 Expenditure data for hunters, anglers, and wildlife viewers active in Oregon:**

	<b>Hunters</b>	<b>Anglers</b>	<b>Viewers</b>
Food and Lodging	\$35.8Million	\$148.7Million	\$275Million
Transportation	\$42.3 Million	\$ 95.8Million	\$196.8 Million
Other Trip Costs *	\$16.9Million	\$29.7 Million	\$9.9 Million
Equipment	\$61.5Million	\$235.3Million	\$ 253.2Million
Other * *	\$16.9Million	\$29.7Million	\$196Million

Approximate total:	\$173.6 Million	\$538.4 Million	\$930.9 Million
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*\*'Other trip costs' include expenditures for guide fees, land-use fees, access permits and equipment rental.*

*\*\* 'Other' expenses include expenditures for magazines, membership dues, contributions, stamps and permits.*

ODFW website:

- [Visitors' Guide; viewing map; and weekly recreation reports](#)
- [Wildlife Viewing opportunities in Oregon](#)

### ***Tourism Opportunities related to the Oregon Conservation Strategy***

Tourism opportunities promoted by the Conservation Strategy will be implemented in partnership with Travel Oregon. ODFW and partners will work with landowners and land managers, communities and other partners in developing projects and be sensitive to any concerns local communities may have. All proposed actions must review and consider any potential impacts to both species and habitats.

#### *Planning, policy and project development - joint tourism marketing and market research opportunities.*

Under Brand Oregon, explore joint opportunities for cooperative marketing of key nature-based tourism themes (including wildlife watching). In addition, determine priority areas of joint need for undertaking cooperatively funded market research that will better inform the marketing and product development strategies adopted.

#### *Determining regional priorities for tourism in relation to wildlife watching opportunities and their marketing and development.*

In relation to any regional program development criteria involving wildlife tourism initiatives, investigate the merits of applying two or more levels of developmental and marketing status for Oregon's ecoregions.

Each level would be acknowledged to have different strategic and program support needs, which also might logically reflect different levels of investment. For example:

- ready proximity to visitor markets (and major ports/cities/highways of entry);
- product/experience readiness;
- product quality;
- extent of products' visitor and market appeal
- extent of supporting amenities and services (including nearby accommodation options);
- the extent of other available experiences' of complementary importance to visitors

#### *Building on existing and recent wildlife-watching programs*

Many fish and wildlife-watching programs exist and can be supported and expanded.

- Work with Travel Oregon, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Audubon Society, federal agencies, and other partners to promote development of "birding trails" in Oregon, building on the current network of trails.
- Work with Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to support existing whale watching programs and work with local groups to promote existing wildlife festivals.

*Determining a cost effective education and development approach to wildlife tourism in Oregon.*

Great benefits can result from adopting a tourism education and tourism development approach that draws on the success of others and the value of trialing new 'product' ideas through pilot projects selected for their high likelihood of success and their likely educational value. For example, in relation to privately owned and operated wildlife and nature-based tourism services/attractions, the successful case studies represented by Wanderlust Tours in Bend, and Marine Discoveries in Newport could be documented and distributed (possibly in association with Travel Oregon). Research the basis of success for such leading nature-based products and other international example of best practice in this interest area.

*Developing further highly innovative wildlife experiences (including interpretive facilities) that capture the imaginations of visitors as well as national and international recognition and publicity.*

Today visitors can choose from a world of competing leisure and entertainment options, with the form of these often crossing over from one traditional context to another (e.g. cruising, entertainment, food, on board rock climbing walls, etc.). Visitors are far more discerning and aware of an explosive growth in these available options. Therefore in the context of beautiful natural environments and wildlife viewing opportunities, it is no longer simply the beauty and the wildlife alone that can constitute the extent of the experience, but the way in which the experience itself is provided and accessed. An example is the tree top canopy walks that have been designed around the world, some seemingly offering an intrinsic (but safe) sense of danger as part of their appeal. Another good example is the BLM Cascades Streamwatch (Wildwood Recreation Area) facility near Mt Hood, where the viewer can look into the side of the stream at young salmon in which they are living. Exploring exciting new 'world standard' opportunities here for a range of suitable wildlife experiences jointly with other partners or private investors) is a serious investment option for regions and locations that possess the right mix of wider tourism destination, product and marketing qualities. The development of trails such as the Birding Trails of Oregon, warrants an exploration of the opportunities for innovation and thorough implementation of the trail's on the ground features (e.g., signage, interpretation, guide books, trail distribution, and cross promotion of companion needs like accommodation and food, equipment supplies, etc.) .

Potential focus areas for innovation could also include innovative visitor interpretation developments, exciting new wildlife observation facilities and tours, or even new joint ventures with private industry over nature-based accommodation options adjacent to high interest natural environments.

*Adopting a proactive leadership role on sustainable wildlife tourism practices and opportunities in Oregon and exploring further related partnership and alliance opportunities.*

Investigate joint project possibilities of mutual interest between partners. Identify overlapping areas of visitor/community related policy, planning and development activity. Exchange research and policy insights, as well as knowledge of new development opportunities. Agencies' day-to-day policy decisions (e.g. timing of hunting and fishing seasons) can prove of great importance and benefit to tourism in Oregon. Regular liaison with Travel Oregon and Oregon's tourism industry (including regional Destination Management Organizations) could be helpful in addressing potentially unforeseen impacts to tourism.

Over time, partnership development with the tourism industry could generate sufficient revenues to some wildlife/nature based industry tour operators (e.g. whale/marine watching) to permit them to contribute to conservation and scientific activities surrounding those experiences.

Further tourism and economic development options might include an exploration of how to advance partnerships with local and regional festivals with a nature or wildlife based theme – to help these become stronger in appeal and more successful for their communities and for the programs that support them.

Building closer working relationships with the convention/conference and meetings tourism sector to expand the available conference leisure options for business and other visitors is a further possibility. Partnering with tourism operators to build greater visitor and community awareness of conservation issues, practices and participation opportunities is another.

Partnering efforts with regions and communities can help allay their possible fears of the negative effects of tourism – fear of invasion or loss of quality of life. The the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and National Geographic Traveler have identified a highly significant new values-based tourism market, “Geotourism” that treads lightly and values community concerns here. The key need is to manage the types of tourism sought – and focus on target markets that will benefit people and places, not harm them.

#### *Planning for sustainable wildlife related tourism and growth.*

Affirm the known tourism industry and community desires in Oregon for a sustainable approach to tourism development in the State’s regions and a planned approach to tourism growth. In pursuing such a goal, consider the merits of adapting or utilizing an existing model of best practice (such as that developed for conservation based industry accreditation by Ecotourism Australia, who has also been providing similar policy development services to the World Tourism Organization.)

In accordance with industry feedback, consider developing an ‘Oregon model’ for wildlife tourism planning, along with a widely available charter identifying its key development values and principles. Sustainable tourism policy positions have been actively adopted by many leading destinations and states around the western world and beyond (e.g. Costa Rica). Their governments and industry leaders share the view, apparently strongly shared by the Oregon tourism industry that it is essential to protect significant community and tourism assets if the industry is to continue to prosper well into the future. Such policies also serve to maintain visitor satisfaction and community goodwill. Oregon’s tourism industry leaders share the view that staying true to Oregon’s natural and civic heritage and character will provide the best tourism opportunities.

Such a best practice model would be instrumental in helping retain Oregon’s sense of distinctiveness (Keeping Oregon ‘Oregon’) and the essential qualities and way of life that makes the state and its regions so appealing to local communities and visitors alike. It would draw on and reflect these authentic qualities and Oregonian’s most prized community values – including their pride in the state’s comparatively unspoiled natural beauty and protected wildlife.

### **Human Dimensions of Fish and Wildlife Conservation**

Social science research can support conservation by increasing understanding of what connects people to nature, how people view conservation, what conservation actions appeal to them, and how to build public interest in stewardship. Cultural background influences perspectives on conservation, as well as how to best communicate with various publics. As Oregon’s population continues to become more

diverse, conservation outreach will increasingly need to consider the broader spectrum of cultural values.

Environmental education and fish- and wildlife-based tourism programs should be monitored via human dimensions research to determine if they appeal to people, if they are meeting their goals, and how they can be improved. Lastly, it is important to better understand what landowners need and want to support voluntary conservation on their land. Conservation partners need to work with landowners in determining the most appropriate conservation design or methods to make conservation work better on-the-ground.

Human Dimensions in Wildlife is an emerging field of study that blends the social sciences and natural resource management to answer these kinds of questions. Relevant information can be collected through a variety of methods, including surveys, focus groups, structured interviews, workshops, etc. Target audiences include consumptive users (e.g., hunters), non-consumptive users (e.g., bird watchers), urban/rural residents, private landowners, business owners, etc. [Partnerships](#) with universities that do public policy and other social research can help address some of these information needs.

## **Appendix 1: Existing Planning and Regulatory Framework for Conservation**

Over the past three decades, Oregonians have come to recognize the degree to which human activity has changed the landscape of our state and affected the fish and wildlife populations. Many efforts to address concerns about species declines have been crisis-driven, focused on individual species and contingent on available funds.

At the same time, there is a growing recognition among researchers, agencies and land managers that nature works on many scales. Effectively conserving populations of native species requires strategic and varied approaches that address species and their habitats across broad landscapes as well as local sites.

Responsibility for fish and wildlife conservation planning and regulatory programs is shared by many agencies, organizations, institutions and individuals. In fact, there are so many entities involved that it is not feasible to describe all of their efforts here. This section addresses activities and responsibilities of state and local government entities, and includes larger-scale public/private efforts to plan for and conserve fish, wildlife and their habitats.

### **The Foundation: Oregon's Planning Efforts**

#### **A Solid Foundation**

Numerous planning efforts have identified priority species, habitats and actions within Oregon. Plans have been completed at local, state and regional levels by agencies, coalitions, and non-governmental organizations. These plans have differed in their purposes, goals and scales of analysis. These processes as well as more localized efforts have built the knowledge base and relationships that set the stage for establishment of a state conservation strategy. The Strategy builds upon these existing efforts with the goal of providing an overarching framework for conservation in Oregon.

Listed below are some of the major planning efforts for Oregon. This list is not meant to be comprehensive, as there are many plans available, but rather represents the major efforts consulted during development of this Strategy. A few of these efforts are currently in development. For these, either draft plans were reviewed or ODFW Strategy staff met with other planning staff.

#### **Major Statewide Planning Efforts in Oregon**

*Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds* In 1997, when several stocks of Oregon salmon were proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act, state officials launched an effort to avoid the listing and its many negative consequences by creating a recovery program unique to Oregon. It has evolved into a broad scale effort that involves an extensive array of private and public partners and restoration efforts at all scales of government, society and natural systems..

The Oregon Plan uses funding from Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, to create a framework for watershed restoration, salmon recovery and improvements in water quality. More than \$20 million, primarily derived from lottery funds, is channeled each year through OWEB to a wide variety of voluntary activities across the state that support the Oregon Plan.

Its four components include:

- Voluntary restoration actions by private landowners
- Coordinated state and federal agency and tribal actions

- Monitoring watershed health, water quality, and salmon recovery, and
- Scientific oversight by an independent panel of scientists who evaluate the plan's effectiveness, identify needed changes, and guide research investments.

Most of the plan's focus is on actions to improve water quality and quantity and restore habitat. Watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts are the primary facilitators of restoration efforts among local landowners. Many watershed groups have developed detailed, specific local conservation assessments.

*The Oregon GAP Analysis Project* The Gap Analysis Program (GAP) brought together the problem-solving capabilities of federal, state, and private scientists to tackle the difficult issues of land cover mapping, vertebrate habitat characterization, assessment, and biodiversity conservation at the state, regional, and national levels. The program seeks to facilitate cooperative development and use of information. The Oregon Gap Analysis project (OR-GAP) began work in 1988, as the second GAP program in the nation. It was a collaborative, multi-partner effort to map and analyze vegetation, land ownership, land management and species distribution. The major goals were to

- Produce GIS-databases describing actual land cover type, historical land cover type, terrestrial vertebrate species distributions, land stewardship, and land management status at a scale of 1:100,000, 1
- Identify land cover types and terrestrial vertebrate species that currently are not represented or are under-represented in areas managed for long-term maintenance of biodiversity, i.e., "gaps," and
- Facilitate cooperative development and use of information so that institutions, agencies, and private land owners may be more effective stewards of Oregon's natural resources. The development of the stewardship coverage and the species distribution databases has improved the ability for others to do statewide and local assessments. ORNHIC has continually updated the managed area cover and the species distribution databases, to provide crosswalks between the new wildlife habitat models and any new vegetation or land cover maps which become available.

*The Oregon Biodiversity Project* The Oregon Biodiversity Project was a privately initiated, collaborative effort envisioned in the early 1990s and launched in 1994 to develop a statewide strategy for conserving biodiversity. This private-sector endeavor engaged public agencies, private organizations and a broad array of stakeholders to develop a statewide biodiversity assessment and strategy, which was completed in 1996. In contrast to the conventional approach of addressing endangered species individually, this was an effort to address biodiversity issues more broadly across political boundaries, using computer mapping technology, satellite imagery and principals of conservation biology. The project was led by the West Coast Office of Defenders of Wildlife in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, the Natural Heritage Program and a variety of public and private sector partners. The Oregon Biodiversity Project's primary goal is to develop a pragmatic statewide strategy to conserve Oregon's native biodiversity. The Biodiversity project was intended to reduce the risk of future endangered species designations, and give landowners more flexibility in resource management decisions. The project also has sought to establish a process to improve communication among diverse public and private interests and help people find common ground in resource management decisions. The result was *Oregon's Living Landscape: strategies and opportunities to conserve biodiversity*, and other associated products. *Oregon's Living Landscape* described the issues in each ecoregion, identified priority species and habitats, and identified priority conservation areas.

ODFW Wildlife Diversity Plan The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission adopted the Oregon Wildlife Diversity Plan in November 1993 and updated it in January 1999. This plan sets forth the goal, objectives, strategies, sub-strategies, and program priorities for ODFW's Wildlife Conservation Program. Although the focus of this plan is on nongame species, it addresses all fish and wildlife species, both game and nongame. In addition to being a policy document to guide the Wildlife Diversity Program actions, the Oregon Wildlife Diversity Plan is also a reference document containing biological information on fish and wildlife species in the state; habitat information, organized by physiographic provinces; and summaries of state and federal laws and programs affecting fish and wildlife and their habitats.

Oregon Department of Transportation mitigation and conservation bank strategy – Many local, state, and federal regulatory processes include mitigation requirements for unavoidable impacts to protected resources. Mitigation usually includes restoration, creation, or enhancement of that the impacted resource. ODOT has developed a comprehensive mitigation and conservation banking strategy to assess natural resource impacts, prioritize mitigation and conservation investments, and provide ecologically valuable mitigation and conservation projects throughout the state. The Mitigation Bank is intended to focus on regional ecological priorities, improve watershed health, improve habitat connectivity, and make meaningful contributions to the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

Oregon Board of Forestry Forestry Program for Oregon - The Forestry Program for Oregon is a sustainability plan developed by the Board of Forestry along with input from the public. The Board of Forestry consists of Governor-appointed volunteers who oversee Oregon's forest protection laws and regulations. The Forestry Program for Oregon lays out the board's eight-year vision for Oregon's forests. It also describes how Oregon's private and public forest landowners can work with citizens to ensure that Oregon's forests are managed to balance economic, environmental and social benefits. This progressive plan addresses important challenges such as growing populations, the conversion of forests for other uses and the declining health of federal forests. It establishes [19 indicators](#) of sustainable forest management that serve as measuring sticks. Established in 1977, the program's most recent eight-year plan was adopted in 2011.

Oregon Department of Forestry Forest Practices Act – The Oregon Forest Practices Act (FPA) sets standards for any commercial activity involving the establishment, management or harvesting of trees on Oregon's forestlands. The FPA regulates these operations on all non-federal lands (private, state-owned, and county- or city-owned). The broad categories covered in the FPA include planning and conducting forest harvesting operations, road construction and maintenance, fish and wildlife protection, chemical use, and reforestation. Every non-federal landowner in Oregon planning any kind of commercial forest operation is required to file a written notification and site map with the Oregon Department of Forestry and follow the rules set forth in the FPA.

Oregon Forest Collaboratives – Forest collaboratives have been forming throughout Oregon over the past two decades as part of an increase in community-based organizations working to achieve natural resource management goals to complement the work of public land agencies, like the U.S. Forest Service. There are now 23 collaborative groups in Oregon; 14 are focused on "Dry Forest" landscapes and 9 are focused on "West-side Forests", and there is at least one community-based collaborative group working with each of the 11 National Forests located in Oregon. Collaboratives include a variety of stakeholders from public, tribal, private, non-profit organizations, businesses, and engaged citizens. These collaboratives have focused on facilitating the scaling-up of landscape-level agreement, treatment, restoration, and monitoring activities.

## **Regional and Broad-Scale Multi-State Planning Efforts**

Oregon conservation planning has occurred within the context of several multi-state efforts. These plans examine the complex interactions between multiple species and habitats across broad areas, and provide insight for Oregon's Strategy. Although each of these planning efforts has slightly different goals and objectives, they provide a solid basis for natural resources planning in Oregon. These plans were consulted in development of the Strategy, and will continue to be referenced as appropriate, as the Strategy is implemented.

*Northwest Forest Plan* – Adopted in 1994, the Northwest Forest Plan (NFP) is an integrated, comprehensive design for ecosystem management, intergovernmental and public collaboration, and rural community economic assistance for federal forests in western Oregon, Washington, and northern California. The intent of the NWFP is to adopt coordinated management direction for the lands administered by the USDA Forest Service and the USDI Bureau of Land Management and to adopt complimentary approaches by other Federal agencies within the range of the northern spotted owl. The management of these public lands must meet dual needs: the need for forest habitat and the need for forest products. Although focused on the spotted owl, the plan was intended to address the needs of a wide array of species affected by loss and fragmentation of late successional forests, and covers over 1,000 species of plants, animals, and fungi. The Northwest Forest Plan has yet to be fully implemented. For example, the ten federal adaptive management areas established in the Plan to emphasize research on ecosystem function in forested landscapes have not been utilized. Full implementation of the economic, social and environmental goals of the Northwest Plan is needed to ensure sustainable use of Federal forestlands.

*The Nature Conservancy's Ecoregional Assessments* – The Nature Conservancy's ecoregion planning approach divides the nation into physiographical similar areas to identify and protect large tracts of land that are characterized by unique natural areas and features. The Conservancy has strategic plans for threatened areas within each ecoregion to protect and maintain biodiversity. The process includes assessment of species and ecosystems within an ecoregion, setting species and habitat goals, designing a network that will meet those goals and identifying highest priority areas to conserve. The Conservancy then works with partners to establish the conservation network.

*Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project* – The project developed a framework for ecosystem management and a scientific assessment of the ecological, biophysical, social and economic conditions of the Columbia basin, including all of Eastern Oregon. Instead of a formal, basin-wide decision from the project, federal decision makers adopted a strategy of incorporating the science into ongoing Forest Service and BLM land management plans.

*Federal land management plans* National Forest Plans (U.S. Forest Service) and Resource Management Plans (U.S. Bureau of Land Management) – These plans provide management direction for the many multiple uses of national forests including outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, fish and wildlife, minerals, wilderness, roadless areas, and cultural resources. These plans were amended by the Northwest Forest Plan on the Westside and the Interior Columbia Basin Strategy on the eastside.

*An Ecosystem Approach to Salmonid Conservation (Spence et al., 1996; ManTech Environmental, Inc.; developed for NMFS, EPA and USFWS):* Provides a natural-science based framework for government agencies and landowners to incorporate an ecosystem approach to habitat conservation planning,

protection, and restoration of aquatic habitat on nonfederal lands in the Pacific Northwest. Includes guidance for developing, monitoring and implementing habitat conservation plans in a larger regional context of conservation goals.

Western Governor's Association Ten Year Comprehensive Wildfire Strategy Advisory committee with experts on forest health policy, including timber industry representatives, state and federal land managers, rural community leaders and environmental representatives developed comprehensive, state-of-the-science strategy to best protect communities and the environment from the dangers of catastrophic wildfire.

Northwest Power and Conservation Council The Northwest Power and Conservation Council is an agency representing Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. The Council is directed by the Northwest Power Act of 1980 to develop a program to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife of the Columbia River Basin affected by hydropower dams. The Council has three primary responsibilities:

- Develop a 20-year electric power plan that will guarantee adequate and reliable energy at the lowest economic and environmental cost to the Northwest,
- Develop a program to protect and rebuild fish and wildlife populations affected by hydropower development in the Columbia River Basin, and
- Educate and involve the public in the Council's decision-making processes.

Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST) CREST is a council of governments that includes local counties, cities, and port districts surrounding the Columbia River Estuary in both Oregon and Washington. CREST is a non-regulatory, regional organization providing a forum for members to identify and discuss issues of regional importance; to monitor and comment on governmental activities related to the development and management of the natural, economic, and human resources of the Columbia River Estuary; and to improve communication and cooperation between member governments.

CREST provides coastal and estuarine technical services for members, coordinates activities between agencies, and provides information, maps, and educational materials to residents of the region. Examples include permitting issues, zoning ordinance, comprehensive plan and shoreline master plan amendments, estuarine impact analysis, wetlands issues, dredging issues, and water quality issues. CREST developed a 1977 publication, Columbia River Estuary Inventory of Physical, Biological, and Cultural Characteristics that was used to develop the Columbia River Estuary Regional Management Plan in 1979, which was adopted in the local comprehensive plans in Oregon and shoreline master programs in Washington.

The Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority Established by charter in 1987, the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority objectives includes coordinating the fish and wildlife activities of interagency and tribal concern, facilitating interagency and tribal involvement in the implementation of the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program, and interacting with the water and land planning and management authorities of the Columbia River Basin. The Authority's members include the four state (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana) and two federal (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service) fish and wildlife management entities and thirteen Indian tribes of the Columbia River Basin.

Columbia River Gorge Commission The Columbia River Gorge Commission was authorized by the 1986

Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act and created through a bi-state compact between Oregon and Washington in 1987. The Commission was established to develop and enforce policies and programs that protect and enhance the scenic, natural, cultural and recreational resources of the Gorge, while encouraging compatible growth within existing urban areas of the Gorge and allowing economic development outside urban areas consistent with resource protection. The Commission works in partnership with a number of entities to implement a regional Management Plan. Partners include Oregon and Washington; the USDA Forest Service; four treaty Indian Tribes -- the Nez Perce, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Yakima Indian Nations; Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties in Washington; and Hood River, Multnomah, and Wasco counties in Oregon.

Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission - The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) is the technical support and coordinating agency for fishery management policies of the four Columbia River treaty tribes. These tribes include: The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Indian Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and the Nez Perce Tribe. Membership is composed of the fish and wildlife committees of these tribes. CRITFC, formed in 1977, employs biologists, other scientists, public information specialists, policy analysts, and administrators who work in fisheries research and analyses, advocacy, planning and coordination, harvest control and law enforcement.

Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership The Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership, one of 28 programs in the National Estuary Program is a two-state, public-private initiative. Its primary responsibility is to implement the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the 146 miles of the lower Columbia River and estuary. The Management Plan was developed by bringing together diverse interests to reach consensus on how to protect this complex portion of the Columbia River system. Using a watershed approach, the Estuary Partnership cuts across political boundaries, integrating 28 cities, nine counties, and the states of Oregon and Washington. The Plan identifies 43 actions to address seven priority issues (biological integrity, impacts of human activity and growth, habitat loss and modification, conventional pollutants, toxic contaminants in sediments, institutional constraints, and public awareness and stewardship). The actions and issues were derived from scientific studies and input from citizens of the lower Columbia River and estuary. The Management Plan has no regulatory authority, and relies on voluntary participation.

### **Local and Regional Plans**

The following local or regional plans are of broad significance.

Oregon Department of Forestry state forest management plans – Oregon Department of Forestry State Forests Management – The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) manages about 860,000 acres of forestlands. ODF managed lands are mostly concentrated in six large state forests:

- Clatsop State Forest
- Elliott State Forest
- Gilchrist State Forest
- Santiam State Forest
- Sun Pass State Forest
- Tillamook State Forest

ODF forest management plans provide management direction for all Board of Forestry Lands and Common School Forest Lands, and are actively managed under adopted forest management plans to provide economic, environmental, and social benefits. These include timber harvest, revenue to local governments and schools, protection of fish and wildlife habitat and other environmental values, and opportunities for recreation and learning.

*Nearshore Marine Resources Marine Strategy (“Nearshore Marine Strategy”)* [\[Insert OCS weblink\]](#)– ODFW’s Marine Resources Program has prepared the Nearshore Marine Strategy to provide a comprehensive, sustainable approach to marine species and habitat management in Oregon. The Nearshore Marine Strategy will be both a stand-alone document, focused on nearshore marine resource issues, and an integral part of this Strategy. The Nearshore Marine Strategy addresses fully marine species, including saltwater fish, shellfish, and marine mammals, and their habitats.

*Oregon Estuary Plan* – Compiled by Oregon’s Department of Land Conservation and Development, the Oregon Estuary Plan book provides an overview of the values and functions of estuaries and the requirements of Statewide Planning Goal 16 (Estuarine Resources). The purpose of Goal 16 is to maintain the environmental, economic and social value of estuaries. The Oregon Estuary Plan Book describes how cities and counties have addressed Goal 16 requirements in local comprehensive plans and land use ordinances, and how these local requirements are applied during review of individual projects. Because estuaries often have complex ownerships and jurisdictions, the Oregon Estuary Plan book promotes coordinated action by local, state and federal agencies that have an interest in Oregon's estuaries.

*Willamette River Initiative’s Willamette Restoration Strategy* –With increasing population and development pressures within the Willamette Valley, Governor Kitzhaber appointed a group to address water quality and habitat issues in the basin and adopt a strategy to protect and restore the basin's ecological health. It was developed through a collaborative process involving over 150 partners and participants from businesses, government agencies, tribes, academia, watershed councils, agriculture, forestry, and environmental organizations. Completed in 2001, the Willamette Restoration Strategy includes plans to protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat and increase populations of declining species within the context of continuing population growth in the basin.

### **Species Conservation and Management Plans**

Many plans have been completed for single species or related groups of species. These plans address needs of threatened or endangered species, game species, and other species of interest.

*ODFW Species Conservation and Management Plans* – ODFW creates species management plans to guide management of game and other species. Examples include Big-Horned Sheep and Rocky Mountain Goat Management Plan, Elk Management Plan, Mule Deer Management Plan, and Black Bear Management Plan. In some cases, the plans are interagency, multi-stakeholder efforts, such as the [Oregon Greater sage-grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy](#).

*ODFW Native Fish Conservation Policy and Stock Status Reports* – ODFW is currently reviewing the status of salmonid populations. This review includes production of a Native Fish Status report on each Species Management Unit and population of selected native fish in the state. The review identifies status using four criteria: Distribution, Abundance, Productivity, and Reproductive Independence. This report is currently in draft form and should be available in summer 2005.

*Oregon Coastal Coho Assessment* – A multi-stakeholder effort coordinated by ODFW and NOAA Fisheries to evaluate the status of Oregon Coast Coho Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit. The Coho Assessment will evaluate actions under Oregon Plan to conserve and rebuild coastal coho populations and develop conservation plan consistent with state and federal recovery plan guidelines.

*Federal Recovery Plans* – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – Fisheries (also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service) are the two agencies charged with the administration and implementation of the Endangered Species Act. The goal of the Endangered Species Act is the recovery of listed species to levels where protection under the Act is no longer necessary. To meet this goal, Recovery Plans delineate reasonable actions that are believed to be required to recover and protect listed species. Plans are published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service for some species. Plans have been prepared with the assistance of recovery teams, contractors, state and federal agencies, and others.

Individual species conservation assessments developed by Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management- *Federal agencies have developed detailed species assessments and plans for many species of interest. Although some of these assessments may cover only a small portion of a species' range, the information may be pertinent to one or more of the Ecoregions, or to the identified strategy habitats within an Ecoregion.*

*Bird Conservation Plans* – Many regional and national bird plans have identified conservation priorities for birds. These plans were consulted in determining Strategy Species. Examples include Partners in Flight Species Scoring, Regional Shorebird Conservation Plans, Regional Waterbird Conservation Plans, OR-WA PIF Bird Conservation Plan Focal Species, National Audubon “WatchList” status, geographical area-specific bird conservation plans and American Bird Conservancy State Green Lists.

*Eastern Oregon All-Bird Plan* – Prepared by the Oregon Habitat Joint Venture, this planning effort reviewed, merged and synthesized the goals and objectives of existing bird conservation plans into a coordinated planning document that reflects the species and habitat priorities of all bird conservation programs in eastern Oregon.

#### Other Natural Resource Planning Efforts for Oregon’s Ecoregions

Some major planning efforts specific to Oregon’s eight ecoregions are listed below. This list is not comprehensive, but demonstrates some of the local efforts to determine issues and priorities. Linking to local planning and restoration efforts will be an effective way to work toward the Strategy’s goals, while providing a greater context and recognition for the efforts of communities.

#### **Blue Mountains Ecoregion**

- Wallowa County Nez Perce Tribe Salmon Habitat Recovery Plan – Wallowa County citizens, the Nez Perce Tribe and agency professionals developed plan to restore and maintain habitat for Chinook salmon and other salmonid species in Wallowa County.
- Watershed Council watershed assessments and action plans
- Sub-basin Plans
- Hells Canyon Initiative (multi-state, multi-agency bighorn sheep restoration effort)
- Local comprehensive land use plans, conservation plans or assessments developed by local city, county, municipal or tribal governments

### **Coast Range Ecoregion**

- Northwest Forest Plan – addresses management of late successional forests on federal land. Includes extensive areas of forest in the Coast Range ecoregion.
- Oregon Department of Forestry state forest plans: Northwest and Southwest Oregon State Forest Management Plans; Elliot State Forest Management Plan; and Elliot State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan
- Watershed Council watershed assessments and action plans
- Sub-basin Plans
- Oregon Coastal Coho Assessment: Evaluate status of Oregon Coast Coho Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit. ODFW, NOAA Fisheries. Assess actions under Oregon Plan to conserve and rebuild coastal coho populations; develop conservation plan consistent with state and federal recovery plan guidelines. Work with multi-stakeholder teams.
- Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans, completed for the Columbia River Estuary (by the Lower Columbia River Estuary Program) and Tillamook Bay (by the Tillamook Bay National Estuary Project): Identify issues, actions and indicators.
- Lower Columbia and Columbia Estuary Bi-State Subbasin Plan: Comprehensive and detailed effort to catalogue wildlife and biological dynamics in the Columbia Estuary; extensive database efforts.
- Oregon Estuary Plan: Compilation of city and county planning effort to address critical needs of Oregon's estuaries
- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Plans: Ocean Shore Management Plan and Habitat Conservation Plan for Snowy Plover (in development).
- Pacific Coast Estuarine Information System: Database developed by USGS and US EPA to catalogue native and invasive estuarine species, sediment, contaminant, and nutrient levels in estuaries of the Pacific Coast
- Local comprehensive land use plans, conservation plans or assessments developed by local city, county, municipal or tribal governments.

### **Columbia Plateau Ecoregion**

- Watershed Council watershed assessments and action plans
- Sub-basin Plans
- Local comprehensive land use plans, conservation plans or assessments developed by local city, county, municipal or tribal governments

### **East Cascades Ecoregion**

- Watershed Council watershed assessments and action plans
- Sub-basin Plans
- Klamath Basin Ecosystem planning effort – An interagency effort managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to address habitat conservation and water management issues.
- The Upper Klamath Basin Working Group – Chartered by Congress in 1996 to develop a plan for the Upper Basin that focuses on enhancing ecosystem restoration, improving economic stability, and minimizing impacts associated with drought on all resources and stakeholders. The Working Group is comprised of over 30 individuals appointed by the Governor of Oregon, representing federal, state, and local governments and agencies;

the Klamath Tribes; conservation organizations; farmers and ranchers; and industry and local businesses. The Working Group completed a restoration plan in 2002.

- Oregon Department of Forestry state forest plans Sun Pass State Forest
- Local comprehensive land use plans, conservation plans or assessments developed by local city, county, municipal or tribal governments

### **Klamath Mountains Ecoregion**

- Watershed Council watershed assessments and action plans
- Sub-basin Plans
- Northwest Forest Plan. Addresses management of late successional forests on federal land. Includes extensive areas of forest in the western part of the Klamath Mountains ecoregion.
- Oregon Coastal Coho Assessment: evaluate status of Oregon Coast Coho Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit. ODFW, NOAA Fisheries. Assess actions under Oregon Plan to conserve and rebuild coastal coho populations; develop conservation plan consistent with state and federal recovery plan guidelines. Work with multi-stakeholder teams.
- Local comprehensive land use plans, conservation plans or assessments developed by local city, county, municipal or tribal governments

### **Northern Basin and Range Ecoregion**

- Watershed Council watershed assessments and action plans
- Sub-basin Plans
- Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Conservation Strategy for Oregon
- Local comprehensive land use plans, conservation plans or assessments developed by local city, county, municipal or tribal governments

### **West Cascades Ecoregion**

- Watershed Council watershed assessments and action plans
- Sub-basin Plans
- Northwest Forest Plan. Addresses management of late successional forests on federal land. Includes extensive areas of forest in the West Cascades ecoregion.
- Oregon Department of Forestry state forest plans Santiam State Forest
- Local comprehensive land use plans, conservation plans or assessments developed by local city, county, municipal or tribal governments

### **Willamette Valley Ecoregion**

- Watershed Council watershed assessments and action plans
- Sub-basin Plans
- Oregon Coastal Coho Assessment: evaluate status of Oregon Coast Coho Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit. ODFW, NOAA Fisheries. Assess actions under Oregon Plan to conserve and rebuild coastal coho populations; develop conservation plan consistent with state and federal recovery plan guidelines. Work with multi-stakeholder teams.
- The Portland Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan describes a vision for a unique regional system of parks, natural areas, greenways and trails for fish, wildlife and people, identifying urban natural areas, trails, and greenway corridors for the Portland metropolitan region.
- Willamette Restoration Initiative. 2002. Community conference on riverfront issues, discussed ecology, history, tourism, and riverfront revitalization. Identified priority

actions for conservation in lowlands and midlands. Emphasized importance of reconnecting floodplain.

- Willamette River Basin Planning Atlas: looks at three alternative scenarios of the Basin's future, showing effects of management of urban, rural and natural lands and waters across the entire basin through the year 2050.
- Local comprehensive land use plans, conservation plans or assessments developed by local city, county, municipal or tribal governments

### **Existing Planning Efforts: Conclusions**

Creative planning work has been done at all levels. Plans are produced by federal state and local public agencies, private land managers, regional bodies, and local, regional, or watershed volunteer groups. Many agencies have built collaborative alliances and are streamlining processes while investing public funds more frugally and wisely. Oregon's land use planning program provides a consistent framework for local governments to assess open space and natural area protection.

Many current and recent plans have focused on solving an individual problem, or managing an individual species, habitats, or geographical areas. The result is a collection of plans with limited coordination and limited means of addressing landscapes. The broad umbrella of the Strategy offers an opportunity to increase coordination of plans, thereby knitting together efforts across purposes, entities and scales.

Although the Strategy takes a large-scale view of Oregon's conservation needs, implementation of Strategy priorities will occur at the local level. Linking to local planning and restoration efforts will be an effective way to work toward the Strategy's goals, while providing a greater context and recognition for the efforts of communities. For example, watershed assessments and action plans provide one such opportunity to build bridges across efforts. A number of watershed councils and other local groups have conducted watershed assessments to evaluate the current health and functional values of the watershed in light of historical conditions. The assessments identify conditions that limit aquatic production and function in particular geographic areas. Many groups have developed an action plan for restoration and protection based on their assessment's findings. Implementation of the Strategy will bring technical assistance, improved access to incentive programs, and landscape approaches to complement local knowledge and priorities.

### **The Existing Regulatory Framework**

This section highlights some of Oregon's regulatory framework. A complete evaluation of the federal regulatory framework is beyond the scope of the Conservation Strategy.

### **Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Program**

Oregon's statewide land use planning program originated in 1973 under Senate Bill 100. The foundation of the program is [19 statewide planning goals](#) covering a range of resources and issues including citizen involvement, protection of farm and forestlands, transportation, public facilities, natural resources and open space, and coastal resources.

The statewide goals are achieved through local comprehensive planning. State law requires each local government to adopt a comprehensive plan that is consistent with the statewide goals, and the implementing ordinances needed to put the plan into effect. The state Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) reviews local comprehensive plans and implementing ordinances for consistency with the Statewide Planning Goals. When LCDC officially approves a local government's

plan, the plan is said to be 'acknowledged. After acknowledgment, the plan becomes the controlling document for land use in the area covered by that plan. State law recommends local governments to go through a periodic review process at specified intervals of time to revise and update plans and ordinances to address new or amended state requirements and changing conditions.

Oregon's planning laws apply not only to local governments, but also to special districts and state agencies. The laws strongly emphasize coordination to keep plans and programs consistent with each other, with the goals, and with acknowledged local plans. Except as provided in ORS 197.277 or 197.180(2) or unless expressly exempted by another statute, ORS 197.180 requires state agencies with programs affecting land use to carry out these programs in compliance with the statewide planning goals and in a manner compatible with local comprehensive plans and land use regulations.

### The Oregon Forest Practices Act

Voted into law by the Legislature in 1971, the Oregon Forest Practices Act was the first of its kind in the nation. The Act encourages economically efficient forest management in Oregon and the continuous growing and harvesting of trees and maintenance of forestland on privately owned land consistent with the protection of forest resources through the sound management of soil, air, water, fish and wildlife resources. It also helps preserve scenic resources along visually sensitive corridors and reduces the risk of serious bodily injury or death caused by shallow, rapidly moving landslides directly related to forest practices. Under the authority of the Act, the Oregon Department of Forestry regulates forest operations on nearly 12 million acres of nonfederal forestland. They guide forest landowners and operators on how to conduct forest operations and activities so they are in compliance with the Forest Practices Act administrative rules. These rules apply to harvesting, reforestation, road construction and repair, slash disposal (treetops, branches, brush and tree limbs left on the ground after a logging operation), chemical use, and stream, lake and wetland protection. Sensitive resource sites, such as bird nesting and roosting locations, and threatened and endangered species sites are also protected under the rules. Oregon's forest ecosystems are diverse and dynamic. The Department of Forestry provides scientific information for adapting policies, management practices, and restoration activities to better achieve management, protection, and restoration goals. The success of the program reflects the vision created by the 1971 Legislature, as well as the tremendous efforts of landowners and stewardship foresters who collaborate on the ground to focus on results, rather than process.

### **Oregon's Regulatory Streamlining Initiative**

Executive Order 03-01 requires state agencies to review their regulations of business activities and their regulatory processes to reduce the burden of regulation on business without compromising Oregon's standards and protections. The Office of Regulatory Streamlining at the Department of Consumer and Business Services was established to facilitate this effort. The Office of Regulatory Streamlining provides ongoing research to identify opportunities for regulatory streamlining and serves as a clearinghouse for agency streamlining efforts.

## Oregon State Agencies

**Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife** is the state agency with a primary responsibility for conserving the state's living fish and wildlife, with a mission of protecting and enhancing species and habitat. The agency manages fish hatchery programs, sets and enforces angler catch limits and hunting tag limits, develops species conservation plans, establishes fish and wildlife policies, manages wildlife areas, and sponsors landowner conservation incentives programs.

Other state agencies hold jurisdiction over individual habitat types such as forests, wetlands, or open waterways.

**Oregon Department of Environmental Quality** regulates water quality by establishing and enforcing state standards for point and non-point pollution for each watershed or subbasin. DEQ requires that plans be developed by the appropriate federal, state or local land management agency for complying with Total Maximum Daily Load limits for each regulated pollutant identified in the watershed.

DEQ maintains a [nonpoint source program](#) to manage water pollution from surface runoff. The program works to enhance watershed protection, voluntary stewardship, and stakeholder partnerships. Among other activities, the program provides technical assistance, a cost-share program, stewardship recognition, and education about watershed enhancement projects.

The Department of Environmental Quality has a number of [permits and programs](#) designed to reduce point or non-point source pollution, including: the Nonpoint Source Program; the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit; Water Pollution Control Facilities (WPF) Permit; NPDES Storm Water Discharge permit; Underground Discharge Permits; Sewage Disposal permits.

**The Oregon Department of Forestry** manages forested lands owned by the residents of Oregon and enforces the requirements of the State Forest Management Act on private land. The Forestry Program for Oregon and the Oregon Forest Practices Act provide the legal and regulatory framework for managing forestlands in Oregon. ODF develops an annual strategic plan and management plans for each state forest. The Department of Forestry also requires plans from landowners harvesting timber on private property, requiring the operation meet a variety of stipulations including riparian buffers, clearcut size, road design and maintenance, and slope stabilization.

The mission of the Oregon Department of Forestry is to serve the people of Oregon by protecting, managing, and promoting stewardship of Oregon's forests to enhance environmental, economic, and community sustainability. Four key department programs work to achieve this mission:

- a. The Private and Community Forests Program's mission is to implement progressive policies and programs, including technical assistance, incentives, and regulation that promote healthy sustainable private and community forestlands. Administration of the Oregon Forest Practices Act and other services to private forest landowners through this program will continue to be important, proven delivery mechanisms for any state wildlife policies affecting these lands.
- b. The Protection From Fire Program's mission is to provide a complete and coordinated forestland fire protection system, and in so doing, safely prevent and suppress fire on or threatening forestland within forest protection districts, in a manner, which minimizes costs and resource losses.

- c. The State Forests Program’s mission is to manage Board of Forestry lands to achieve the greatest permanent value (healthy, productive, and sustainable forest ecosystems), and to manage Common School Forest Lands to maximize revenues over the long term in a manner that is consistent with protecting environmental values. Science-based approaches that include active and integrated resource management techniques will be utilized to ensure that economic, environmental, and social benefits are produced in a sustainable manner.
- d. The Forest Resources Planning Program’s mission is to lead strategic planning, to provide credible and objective analyses for the Board of Forestry and the Department of Forestry, and to actively promote policies that encourage sustainable forest management and further the strategies and actions of the Forestry Program for Oregon on all Oregon forestlands.

**Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development** is in charge of Oregon’s unique and acclaimed land use planning system. DLCD does not manage land. Instead it stipulates practices and processes required of local land managers—cities, counties and Metro Regional Government – to meet 19 goals that cover a broad range of public interests including conservation of farms and forests, natural resources, open space, estuaries, air and water quality and the Willamette River Greenway. Cities and counties are required to develop comprehensive plans that address the 19 goals. The goal that most closely addresses fish and wildlife habitat, Goal 5, requires that cities and counties adhere to a process which requires them to inventory natural resources, determine their significance, identify conflicting uses, and determine whether to allow the conflicting use. Goal 6 provides broad authority to regulate land uses to address water quality. Goal 7 covers areas subject to natural hazards and disasters, including floodplains. Goal 14 has probably had the greatest effect on conserving wildlife habitat by requiring each city or metropolitan area to establish an urban growth boundary that restricts urban development from encroaching on adjacent farms and forests. Goal 15 establishes the Willamette Greenway. Goals 16 (Estuarine Resources), 17 (Coastal Shorelands) and 18 (Beaches and Dunes) regulate development in coastal areas.

**The Department of State Lands** manages state properties as investments to increase state revenues. Its holdings include 784,000 acres of upland property including the 78,000-acre Elliot State Forest. DSL also manages the state’s submerged public lands and regulates excavation and filling of waterway beds and banks. DSL regulates wetlands permits in Oregon and helps local governments inventory, assess, designate, and develop management plans for wetlands under Oregon’s land use Goals 5 (Natural Resources), 16 (Estuaries) and 17 (Coastal Shorelands).

**Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board** is the state agency that promotes and funds efforts to restore salmon runs, improve water quality and strengthen aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems to improve conditions of watersheds throughout the state. It is the primary vehicle for funding the activities of watershed councils and provides financial and technical support to Soil and Water Conservation Districts and other local conservation groups. With OWEB support, many councils have completed watershed assessments and have or are developing watershed action plans. They also provide funding for some capacity build as well as on the ground restoration activities. OWEB is building a restoration database and produces progress reports and educational materials.

A number of state agencies do not directly manage species or habitat, but as they manage state lands, infrastructure or a wide variety of state-run activities they are required to consider their effects on species and habitat.

**The Oregon Department of Agriculture** is responsible for development of agricultural water quality plans and rules (SB1010) for each basin in the state. These plans were developed by ODA, working with local stakeholders. The plans include goals, objectives and recommended practices for agriculture to improve water quality and the rules require certain conditions to be met.

**Oregon Parks and Recreation Department** manages publicly owned properties throughout the state including the Willamette Greenway. While the department's primary emphasis is on recreation, park land management conserves and supports a variety of conservation goals. Each state park management plan addresses the unique features of the site and identifies specific actions to enhance them. For example, park managers are reintroducing fire at Champoeg State Heritage Area and Elijah Bristow State Park as a tool for restoring Willamette Valley white oak savannas.

**Oregon Department of Transportation** shares staff and consults with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding the effects of road construction on habitat, particularly fish passage. ODOT is increasingly addressing habitat connectivity and exploring opportunities to incorporate wildlife passage into road and highway plans. A statewide bridge reconstruction project launched in 2002 has served as a means to streamline planning and work in concert with fish and wildlife programs.

**Oregon Department of Water Resources** manages Oregon surface and groundwater. The agency enforces water laws, facilitates voluntary efforts to restore stream flows and works with watershed groups on water supply issues. Oregon water rights are based on seniority. It is the role of Water Resources to determine during drought periods who gets water and who doesn't. On many streams throughout the state, by the end of summer, there is only enough water to supply users who established their rights in the late 1800s. In settings where water rights are over allocated--more rights exist than water in the stream--the Water Resources Department is the arbitrator of competing uses-- industries, agriculture, municipalities or fish and wildlife.

### **Federal Agencies**

Oregon state government is one player among a broad spectrum of organizations engaged in conservation activities. The federal government manages over 34 million acres of publicly owned land in Oregon, comprising over half of the state. Management of these lands primarily falls under the departments of Interior and Agriculture. Specific entities within those departments include:

- The US Forest Service manages approximately 17.5 million acres of national forests and grasslands.
- The US Bureau of Land Management manages nearly 16 million acres of lands, much of which is interspersed through private property.
- The US National Park Service manages almost 200,000 acres mostly in Crater Lake National Park, and
- The US Fish and Wildlife Service manages an extensive refuge system .

In addition to the federal government's role as land owner, it establishes laws and executive orders that place requirements on states to comply with regulations, most of which require planning, federal and local oversight, monitoring and reporting.

Additionally, a number of federal agencies provide services that are not primarily focused on fish and wildlife species or habitat management, but are strongly linked through land use. For example, the Natural Resource Conservation Service primarily provides technical support to agricultural landowners.

By virtue of that connection, it provides regional conservation support through its Resource Conservation and Development program as well as incentives programs to rural landowners for projects such as wildlife habitat enhancement and fish passage. The US Fish and Wildlife Service works with private landowners, government agencies, and others to restore and conserve native species and habitats.

### **Regional Efforts**

There also are regional bodies formed to address specific management issues that cross state boundaries. Two of these entities engage in complex planning efforts that affect public and private lands and waterways. The Northwest Power and Conservation Council is charged with developing a plan to guarantee a 20-year supply of reliable and affordable power for the region while protecting and rebuilding fish and wildlife populations affected by power generation activities in the Columbia River Basin. Their most recent major planning endeavor has been development of plans for the 22 subbasins that make up the Columbia River Basin, with the purpose of focusing resources into highest priority restoration investments.

The **Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area** covers two states, six counties and 13 cities on both sides of the Columbia River and was formed to protect the scenic, recreational and natural resource qualities of the gorge. Commissioners appointed by governors of Washington and Oregon set policy and direct its management under the Gorge Management Plan, which includes stipulations for protection of natural resources, covering wetlands, aquatic habitat, and at risk wildlife species. Site plans submitted to cities, counties or the commission are reviewed by respective state wildlife agencies, and where deemed appropriate, wildlife protection plans are required. The 13 urban areas are exempt from these land use provisions.

### **Local Governments**

Oregon's lands include 240 incorporated cities and 36 counties that each must comply with state and federal requirements for wildlife and fish habitat conservation. Each exercises considerable individuality in doing so, based on financial resources, local habitat conditions and direction from local officials and citizens. All cities and counties have developed local comprehensive plans to address statewide planning goals. Many cities and counties have developed conservation plans to address local conservation issues.

In a number of urbanized areas of the state, cities and counties have formed voluntary councils of government to pool resources and cooperate on issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries. The nature and purpose of these councils is widely varied, reflecting their respective natural and political landscapes. There are nine such councils counting Metro Regional Government, the only such regional body to hold regulatory authority. Several engage in wildlife conservation planning and management activities ranging from open space acquisition to riparian restoration to conservation education. As an example of their capabilities, the Lane Council of Governments has partnered with Eugene and Springfield, The Nature Conservancy, and the Bureau of Land Management to develop a land acquisition plan called Rivers to Ridges, acquiring and restoring the West Eugene Wetlands as native wetlands and wet prairies that also provide urban residents with open space, recreation, storm water management and flood control. Another example in the Portland area is the Metro program "Title 3." This is a regulatory program for water quality protection and floodplain management that also addresses vegetation corridors within the urban growth boundary. Also in Portland, the Metro 2040 program is a significant land use planning program that integrates fish and wildlife habitat protection, concerns about water quality and quantity, and regional growth.

In addition to these local jurisdictions and regional bodies, Oregon has a variety of special districts that deal with aspects of fish and wildlife conservation. Soil and Water Conservation Districts provide assistance to landowners primarily in rural areas. As part of that service, they assist with habitat conservation planning ranging from stream buffers to fish passage and provide assistance with incentives programs to help fund these projects.

Parks districts often pool funding from counties and cities to provide recreational services across jurisdictional boundaries. Many of them restore native vegetation on their sites, partner in planning for public open space and provide natural resource based educational activities and interpretation.

In some cases, water treatment agencies contribute significant services in restoring fish and wildlife habitat, restoring water flows to declining streams and providing educational services. For example, Clean Water Services in Hillsboro shifted its role as a municipal water treatment facility to a ratepayer-funded watershed enhancement agency. In addition to operating four water treatment facilities serving urban Washington County, it developed the Healthy Streams Plan, a coordinated approach for meeting the requirements of the federal Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act in the Tualatin Basin. Oregon Department of Environmental Quality issued a Clean Water Act integrated municipal watershed-based permit for the basin, the first of its kind in the nation, which allows for creative trading between permit holders and landowners in the basin to collectively achieve water quality levels while restoring habitat.

### Native American Tribes

Oregon's Native American tribes are recognized as sovereign nations by the federal and state government and are unique legal entities representing distinct communities. There are five groupings of tribes called confederations as well as four independent tribes. Their land holdings within nine reservations vary in size, population, governing structure and natural resource base.

Tribe	Trust Restoration	Reservation size	Enrollment	Ecoregion
Burns Paiute Tribe		13,738	341	Northern Basin and Range
The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon	1983	11,040	4,926	Willamette Valley
Coquille Indian Tribe	1989	6,512	819	Coast Range
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon		644,000	3,980	East Cascades, Blue Mountains
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon	1977	4,666	4,094	Coast Range
Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation		172,882	2,447	Columbia Plateau
Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw	1984		754	Klamath Mountains/ West Cascades
Klamath Tribes	1986		3,466	East

				Cascades
Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians	1982	1,289		Klamath Mountains

In 1954, the federal government passed the Termination Act, which severed the trust relationship between the government and many native people with the result that they lost federal tribal recognition and control of their reservation lands. Of the 109 tribes and bands terminated, 62 were native to Oregon. The results were devastating and it has taken many years for Oregon’s tribes to restore the trust relationship and rebuild cultural structure and economic stability, including determining the appropriate use and conservation of natural resources on reservation lands.

Many of the tribes have natural resources staff and get financial and technical assistance through the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs as well as work through partnerships. The reservations are at various stages of planning for and management of natural resources

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## **Appendix 2: Existing Voluntary Conservation Programs**

In Oregon there are dozens of voluntary programs that contribute to habitat conservation across the state. Some programs are funded and administered by the state: some are federally funded but administered by the state. Others are federally funded and administered. Some private or non-profit organizations also offer conservation incentives. Here are some of the major programs available in Oregon.

### ***State Programs***

Oregon offers a variety of voluntary conservation programs, allowing landowners to choose which type of benefit to receive and which habitats or species to protect or restore. ODFW summarizes grants and tax incentives [here](#).

#### **Access and Habitat Program**

This program, administered by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, provides direct funding to improve wildlife habitat increase public hunting access to private lands or solve wildlife damage issues. Projects can be implemented on private or public lands. Projects include improvement of vegetation on wild lands; development of wetland habitat; noxious weed control; improving wildlife forage on private lands; development of water in arid regions; reclamation of habitat by vehicular restrictions; seeding after wildfire; hunting leases; land acquisition; seasonal road management and hunter access through private lands to inaccessible public lands; or fencing to control wildlife or livestock. Projects are given high priority if they reduce economic loss to landowners and involve funding commitments or in-kind contributions from other organizations and agencies.

#### **Forestry and Agricultural Stewardship Agreement Program**

(Note: This program is currently under review and revision.)

In this program a landowner may enter into a voluntary stewardship agreement with the Oregon Department of Forestry and/or the Oregon Department of Agriculture. The program is open to landowners who agree to meet and exceed applicable regulatory requirements and to conserve, restore, and improve fish and wildlife habitat or water quality. A stewardship agreement is a voluntary written plan, with authority designated within state statutes, where a landowner agrees to meet the natural resource protection standards of the Oregon Forest Practices Act through alternate practices. The program provides incentives for landowners who voluntarily meet and exceed regulatory requirements to improve wildlife habitat and water quality. Landowners and the State Forester work collaboratively to create long term agreements that consider natural resource conservation and routine forest management from a property wide perspective, rather than at the scale of single projects. Stewardship Agreements were authorized by the 2006 Oregon legislature. The legislative change recognized that in a time of dynamic change in scientific information and social values, improvements to fish and wildlife habitat and water quality cannot succeed through laws and government actions alone. The program was developed to enhance what the legislature described as a characteristically Oregonian “spirit of volunteerism and stewardship”.

#### **Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Grants**

Since 1999, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board provides grants to help Oregonians take care of local streams, rivers, wetlands and natural areas. Community members and landowners use scientific criteria to decide jointly what needs to be done to conserve and improve rivers and natural habitat in the places where they live. OWEB grants are funded from the Oregon Lottery, federal dollars, and salmon license plate revenue. The OWEB Board’s strategic plan (2010) is intended to provide high level

strategic guidance and direction to help restore and protect Oregon’s watersheds in light of significant driving forces like human use, population growth, urbanization, and climate change and ensures priorities are aligned with those developed in the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.

State lottery funding for fish, wildlife and watershed restoration (From Ballot Measure 66 passed in 1998) has increased every biennium since its passage. The 2005-2007 biennium budget for OWEB includes \$41.3 million for “capital” or restoration grants.

Types of grants in the regular grant program include:

- [Protecting Land](#)
- [Protecting Water](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Monitoring](#)
- [Restoration](#)
- [Technical Assistance](#)

#### **[ODFW Restoration and Enhancement Program](#)**

The **Restoration and Enhancement** program is grant program that provides \$2-3,000,000 per year to fishery projects throughout Oregon. The program supports increased recreational fishing opportunities and works to improve the commercial salmon fishery. The restoration program focuses on projects to repair and replace fish production equipment and facilities, and on collecting information on physical and biological characteristics of streams, lakes or estuaries. The enhancement program focuses on projects to increase fish production (either hatchery or natural production), increase recreational or commercial opportunities or access to the fish resources, or improve fish management capabilities. Any public or private non-profit organization may request funds to implement fish restoration or enhancement projects.

#### **[Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Fish Screening or Passage Cost Share Grant](#)**

Oregon water users may be eligible for an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife cost-share incentive program and state tax credit designed to promote the installation of agency approved fish screening or fish passage devices in water diversions. Funds for fish screening and passage projects are to be used to share costs with applicants.

#### **[Oregonians Working for Healthy Watersheds](#)**

##### **Riparian Lands Tax Credit Program**

[www.dor.state.or.us/pit/mytaxes.lasso](http://www.dor.state.or.us/pit/mytaxes.lasso) (click on “Browse all credits”, then scroll to “Riparian”)

This income tax credit program, administered by the Oregon Department of Revenue, encourages farmers to voluntarily grow riparian vegetation along waterways while adjacent lands remain in agricultural production. Farmers must use conservation practices that improve water quality, habitat, and stream bank condition and are consistent with the local agricultural water quality management plan. Farmers can receive a state income tax credit equal to 75% of the market value of crops replaced by riparian vegetation up to 35 feet from a stream.

##### **[Riparian Lands Tax Incentive Program](#)**

This property tax program, administered by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife offers a property tax exemption for riparian land up to 100 feet from a stream. Landowners conserve and restore riparian lands to protect the economic and ecological benefits to soil, water, fish, and wildlife. For riparian land to qualify for this program, it must be outside adopted urban growth boundaries, and zoned for forest or agricultural use. Landowners within urban growth boundaries may qualify if individual cities choose to participate.

#### **Western Oregon Stream Restoration Program**

Administered by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, this program provides direct technical support to watershed councils and private landowners in western Oregon to implement the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds. Technical support includes pre-project assessment; design; assistance with grants, permits, implementation; and effectiveness monitoring. Projects to restore and enhance salmon habitats include increasing in-stream habitat complexity by adding large wood or boulders; enhancing riparian areas by protection or planting; and correcting fish passage problems. Program staff is located in Tillamook, Newport, Charleston, Gold Beach, Clackamas, Corvallis and Roseburg.

#### **Wildlife Habitat Conservation and Management Program**

This program provides property tax benefits and technical assistance to landowners. Participating counties and cities identify farmland, forestland, and/or other significant habitats and ask the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to designate these lands as eligible for the program. An eligible landowner develops a fish and wildlife management plan approved by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The property receives a wildlife habitat special assessment, and is assessed for property taxes as if the land was being farmed or used for commercial forestry. Farming and forestry may continue, as long as they are compatible with fish and wildlife objectives of the management plan. For most landowners, this program allows their property to be used for conservation, and the property shifts from farm or forest special assessment to wildlife habitat special assessment. The program does not provide cost-share, grant, or rental payments to landowners. Leaving the program may obligate landowner to back taxes if the property is not eligible for another special assessment category. County [participation](#) in the program is optional. Fourteen of Oregon's 36 counties are currently participating: Benton, Clackamas, Deschutes, Douglas, Hood River, Jefferson, Lake, Lane, Marion, Morrow, Multnomah, Polk, Sherman, and Wheeler. Within participating counties, landowner participation is influenced largely by landowner familiarity and interest in the program rather than any strategic approach based on priority habitats. The highest participation occurs in Deschutes and Polk counties, where Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife staff, county staff or other conservation partners actively promote the program.

Some non-participating counties may simply have other priorities. Some counties found that the mechanics of the program were complex, but this issue has been addressed through statutory changes. Other counties may perceive that their revenue from property taxes will be reduced. However, in most cases landowners' property taxes remain the same if they were already participating in a special assessment program (for example, farm or forest special assessment) prior to participating. Lack of county participation significantly limits the potential conservation benefits of this program.

### ***Federal Conservation Programs in Oregon***

#### **Farm Bill Programs**

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (The Farm Bill) is a comprehensive federal bill which is reauthorized every five years. The most recent reauthorization was in 2014. The Farm Bill is among the largest sources of conservation funding in the federal government and provides producers with financial and technical

assistance and promotes conservation stewardship. The Bill provides funding through such programs as: the [Conservation Reserve Program](#) (CRP), Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), [Wetlands Reserve Program](#) (WRP), and [Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program](#) (WHIP). Hundreds of millions of dollars are available to private landowners to keep wetlands, grasslands and other fragile lands protected as wildlife habitat.

The CRP pays farmers annual rental payments under 10-15 year contracts, to set aside marginal land. The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) is a voluntary program that enables landowners to restore or protect native grasslands on portions of their property. Grasslands are valuable wildlife habitat currently in decline. WRP allows interested farmers the opportunity to restore, maintain and protect wetlands on their property. Most lands restored under WRP are marginal, high risk, flood-prone lands that wouldn't be suitable for growing crops. The WRP enables landowners to take these lands out of production and restore them to beneficial use as wetland wildlife habitat.

See a [review](#) of programs under the 2014 Farm bill

Also see, "[Payments for Wildlife and Biodiversity Outcomes un Farm Bill Programs](#)" prepared by Defenders of Wildlife

North American Bird Conservation Initiative released the [2014 Farm Bill Field Guide to Fish and Wildlife Conservation](#). This field guide is a tool to assist the staff of federal and state fish and wildlife agencies, nongovernmental conservation organizations, joint ventures, and other conservation partners in implementing Farm Bill conservation programs. It is primarily designed for those who work collaboratively with private landowners and agricultural producers to improve soil health, water quality, as well as fish and wildlife habitat.

Also see Defenders of Wildlife "[A guide to the Farm Bill Conservation Programs](#)"

## **Easements**

### [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](#)

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands.

### [Healthy Forest Reserve Program](#)

Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP) In Oregon, the focus of HFRP is to encourage landowners to manage their land for sustainable, profitable timber harvests while promoting forest conditions that improve habitat for the threatened Northern Spotted Owl. Participating landowners will receive long-term assurances that no additional regulatory restrictions under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) will be imposed beyond the current, baseline conditions if they follow a plan that benefits Northern Spotted Owls. In Oregon HFRP has enrolled lands in Lane, Coos, Douglas, Josephine, Curry and Jackson Counties. HFRP is a voluntary program established for the purpose of restoring and enhancing forest ecosystems to: promote the recovery of threatened and endangered species; improve biodiversity; and enhance carbon sequestration.

## **Financial Assistance**

### **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**

#### [Oregon program](#)

EQIP provides technical and financial assistance to farmers and ranchers to implement conservation practices on their lands. Practices are based on a set of national priorities that are adapted to each state. These priorities include: reduction of point- and non-point source pollution to watersheds and groundwater; water conservation; reduction of soil erosion; and promotion of wildlife habitat for at-risk species. This program, administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, provides direct funding and technical assistance to promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. The program has four national priorities: reducing non-point source water pollution, reducing air emissions, reducing soil erosion, and promoting habitat for at-risk species. Each state develops more specific statewide and local priorities. Private land in agricultural production is eligible for this program with an approved plan and a contract for one to ten years. The program provides cost-share and incentive payments to assist landowners in implementing structural and management changes.

### **Conservation Stewardship Program**

The Conservation Stewardship Program helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance—the higher the performance, the higher the payment.

### **Agricultural Management Assistance Program**

Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA) helps agricultural producers use conservation to manage risk and solve natural resource issues through natural resources conservation. NRCS administers the AMA conservation provisions while the Agricultural Marketing Service and the Risk Management Agency implement other provisions under AMA

### **Regional Conservation Partnerships Program**

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements.

RCP combines the authorities of four former conservation programs – the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program, the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative and the Great Lakes Basin Program. Assistance is delivered in accordance with the rules of EQIP, CSP, ACEP and HFRP; and in certain areas the Watershed Operations and Flood Prevention Program.

Other Programs:

#### [Conservation Innovation Grants \(CIG\)](#)

CIG is a voluntary program intended to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies, while leveraging federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection. Under CIG, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds are used to award competitive grants to non-Federal governmental or non-governmental organizations, Tribes, or individuals.

[Technical Service Providers](#) (TSPs)

[The Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program](#) (VPA-HIP)

**Other Federal Programs:**

**Forest Legacy Program (FLP)**

[National program](#)

<http://www.fs.fed.us/cooperativeforestry/programs/loa/flp.shtml>

[Oregon program](#)

The Forest Legacy Program is administered by the USDA Forest Service and individual states to protect private forest lands from conversion to non-forest uses, and to ensure that both economic uses of private forest lands and the public benefits they provide are protected for future generations. Forestland can be conserved through purchase of a conservation easement, which acquires the landowner's development rights and allows the land to remain in private ownership, or through purchase in fee simple. Each state develops an assessment of need that identifies high-priority private forestlands to protect. To receive federal funding, states submit an application package to the U.S. Forest Service, which uses a competitive process in distributing grant funds. The program funds up to 75 percent of project costs.

The program operates in designated [Forest Legacy Areas](#) (pdf) where important forests may be lost to non-forest uses. The Forest Legacy Program seeks projects that strengthen local communities through state, local and private partnerships in conservation. Landowner participation in the Forest Legacy Program is voluntary. In 2001, an Assessment of Need for Oregon was developed cooperatively by the Oregon Department of Forestry, the Oregon Natural Heritage Program, and the US DA Forest Service. The assessment identified 15 Forest Legacy Areas where private forestland is significantly threatened by potential conversion to residential, urban, and other non-forest uses within the next ten years. The Forest Legacy Areas, which cover about 13% of Oregon's private forestland, were chosen to focus efforts where important forest resources are at risk. Ecological, social, and economic factors were considered in identifying and prioritizing the Forest Legacy Areas.

The 15 Forest Legacy Areas occur in five ecoregions: Coast Range (2), Willamette Valley (6), Klamath Mountains (3), Eastern Cascades (3), and Blue Mountains (1). The habitat priorities in each ecoregion correspond closely to the forest Strategy Habitats identified in this document.

*Coast Range:* Forest Legacy Areas include forest habitats dominated in different areas by Sitka spruce, shore pine, Port-Orford-cedar, Oregon white oak, tan oak, grand fir, Douglas fir, and coast redwood. Other important habitats include wetlands, saltmarshes, and coastal dunes.

*Willamette Valley:* Forest Legacy Areas include oak woodlands, oak savanna, riparian and floodplain forests, mixed forests, and conifer forests. Forest Legacy Areas cover most of the Willamette Valley because these forest types occur across the landscape and most of this ecoregion is privately owned.

*Klamath Mountains:* Forest Legacy Areas include oak woodlands, oak savannas, white oak /black oak / madrone forests, low elevation Ponderosa pine forests and woodlands, mixed forests, riparian bottomland forests, knobcone pine, Jeffrey pine, Port-Orford-cedar, and canyon live oak.

*Eastern Cascades:* Forest Legacy Areas include oak woodlands, oak savannas, oak / Ponderosa pine forests, Ponderosa pine forests and woodlands, riparian and wetland habitats.

*Blue Mountains:* Forest Legacy Areas include riparian and bottomland woodlands with cottonwood, alder, aspen, and spruce.

### **North American Wetlands Conservation Act:**

This program provides funding to promote conservation of wetlands and associated habitats for migratory birds, fish, and other wildlife. A funded grant, with partner match, serves as a four-year plan of action to conserve wetlands and wetland-dependent fish and wildlife through acquisition, easements, restoration, and/or enhancement. The application process is rigorous but provides substantial funding, between \$50,000 and \$1,000,000. A small grants program designed as a stepping stone to help applicants prepare for larger projects provides grants up to \$50,000. Projects must include adequate wetlands-associated uplands to buffer and protect conserved wetlands and to meet the needs of wetland-associated fish and wildlife. In 2005, \$65 million is available nationally for standard grants and \$2 million is available for small grants.

### **Partners for Fish and Wildlife**

This U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service program provides cost-share funding and/or technical assistance for voluntary restoration of fish and wildlife habitats on private land (including non-state and non-federal land). Projects are designed to restore native habitat to function as naturally as possible, preferably resulting in a self-sustaining system. Projects focus on habitats that benefit migratory birds, migratory fish, or federally threatened and endangered species, or on habitats that are designated as globally or nationally imperiled. High priority projects also complement habitat functions on National Wildlife Refuges, occur in areas identified by state fish and wildlife agencies and other partners, or reduce habitat fragmentation.

There is no formal application process. Instead, an interested landowner contacts the state program coordinator and they work together, along with public and private conservation partners, to develop the project. Program funds are used for sharing restoration project costs and are not available to lease, rent, or purchase property. Landowners commit to retain the restoration project for at least ten years.

Funding for this program is allocated for all states, with \$36 million available nationally in 2015. In Oregon, this program restores wetlands, oak savanna, floodplain, wet prairie, shrub steppe, riparian areas and in-stream habitat restoration and fish passage in numerous areas around the state.

### **State Wildlife Grants and Teaming with Wildlife**

Through the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provides annual grants to states, territories, and tribes to support cost effective conservation aimed at keeping wildlife from becoming endangered. The funding is allocated based on land area and population, with Oregon receiving about \$863,000 in 2014 and almost \$13 million since the program began in . In 2014, about \$58 million is available to the states, while about \$4 million is available to federally recognized tribes. Currently, these funds are used to support planning and implementation of key fish and wildlife efforts by funding ODFW staff positions. A comprehensive summary of grant programs administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can be found under "[Grants-At-A-Glance](#)".