



PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA

Regular Private Forest Accord Mitigation Advisory Committee Meeting
Tuesday, September 1, 2026
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife

The Private Forest Accord Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) will attend a field trip in Milton Freewater, OR. The public is welcome to attend in person; however, attendees are responsible for arranging their own transportation and lunch. It is recommended that any member of the public wishing to attend the field trip contact Andy Spyrka ahead of the date to inform ODFW of attendance (Andy.j.spyrka@odfw.oregon.gov) as meeting locations are remote, rural, behind locked gates, and difficult to find.

This single day field trip involves walking directly through an active flowing river corridor. The primary goal of the tour is a walk through the watershed, so please prepare for a lot of walking. Shuttles will be available to carry bags and gear, and to transport attendees throughout the tour as needed. Sturdy boots or rugged waterproof field boots are required.

Meeting Agenda

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| 8:00 | 1. Oxford Suites Hotel
Meeting Location: Oxford Suites Hotel Lobby (2400 SW Court Place, Pendleton, OR 97801).
Meet in the hotel lobby, the Committee will depart at 8:30 am, or sooner if ready. |
| 9:00– 10:00 | 2. Trip Location 1: Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council Office
<i>Meeting Location: 810 S Main St, Milton-Freewater, OR 97862</i> |
| 10:30 – 11:30 | 3. Trip Location 2: Technique Demonstration & Instream Complexity
<i>Meeting Location: Widowmaker River Mile 4.0</i> |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | 4. Trip Location 3: Start of PFA Funded Reach & Channel Braiding
<i>Meeting Location: Darryl Bird House River Mile 4.3</i> |
| 12:30 – 1:30 | 5. Lunch |
| 1:30 – 2:30 | 6. Trip Location 4: Engineered Log Jams (ELJs) & Alluvial Fan Discussion
<i>Meeting Location: Darryl Camp Wood Jams & Road Realignment River Mile 5.2</i> |
| 2:30 – 3:30 | 7. Trip Location 5: Natural Spring Enhancement & Substrate Sorting
<i>Meeting Location: Surface Spring Area River Mile 6</i> |
| 3:30 | 8. Field trip concludes |

The times listed on the agenda are approximate. At the chair's discretion, the time and order of an agenda item—including the addition of a break or executive session — may change to maintain the meeting flow.

RESOURCES: All resources may be found online at <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/habitat/PFA/MAC.html#Resources>.

The Following are the site visit locations for the PFA Grants Advisory Committee September 1, 2026, field trip in Milton Freewater, OR. Time and locations are approximate estimates, please contact the PFA Grant Coordinator if you plan to attend, andy.j.spyrka@odfw.oregon.gov



PRIVATE FOREST ACCORD (PFA) ADVISORY COMMITTEE FILED TRIP

North Fork Walla Walla River Field Trip Packet & Briefing Guide
Milton-Freewater, Oregon | September 1, 2026

Grantee	Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council (WWBWC)
Primary Partners	Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), Cramer Fish Sciences, Jacobs Engineering Group, Private Landowners (Sams Family, Darryl Bird, etc.)
PFA Funding Allocations	Grant #1 (RM 4.3-6.3): \$819,209 (Tracking #: PFA2023-01) Grant #2 (RM 5.2-6.5): \$432,156 (Tracking #: PFA2024-02)
Project Period	2023 – 2030 (Multi-phase landscape scale restoration)
Total Continuous Scope	5.2-mile continuous corridor (River Mile 3.6 to 8.8)
Target Species (PFA HCP-listed)	– Bull trout (<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>) – Anadromous salmonid species (<i>steelhead trout</i>, <i>Chinook salmon</i>) – Resident redband/rainbow trout
Primary Ecological Goal	Restore a severely leveed, simplified single-flume high-velocity reach into a dynamic, multithreaded, climate-resilient river system.

Project Abstract & Regional Significance

Following catastrophic regional floods in 2020 and subsequent emergency mechanical stabilization efforts, the North Fork Walla Walla River was severely simplified and locked within a single-flume channel system. This configuration accelerated streamflow velocities, stripped

vital floodplain gravels, lowered local groundwater tables, and completely disconnected historical side-channel networks and cold-water springs. These structural changes drastically reduced critical spawning, rearing, and holding habitats for ESA-listed native salmonids.

Supported by consecutive PFA grants, this landscape-scale effort systematically breaks down these barriers across a 5.2-mile continuous corridor. By lowering or perforating historic gravel levees, introducing non-anchored process-based engineered log complexes, and protecting regenerating riparian buffers from heavy grazing pressures, this project successfully converts a destructive sediment transport reach into a stable, life-supporting accumulation reach that buffers against summer thermal stress and winter peak flows.

Detailed Field Tour Stopping Locations & Technical Briefings

Stop #1: Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council Office

- **Location:** 810 S Main St, Milton-Freewater, OR 97862
- **Time:** 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM (60 Minutes)
- **Primary Focus:** Pre-Trip Briefing, Watershed-focused film, and Baseline Data Orientation
- **Key Presenters:** Michelle McClellan (Executive Director), Tara Patten (Deputy Director), Eric Hoverson (Project Manager), Colin Meister (Field Technician), Catalina Garza (Project Manager)

Site Description & Technical Scope:

The Committee will begin with a pre-trip multimedia briefing providing context for the entire corridor. The Watershed Council will share high-resolution drone imagery detailing pre- and post-restoration channel configurations, recent juvenile salmonid monitoring observation, and underwater videos of fish utilization. The goal is to bridge the gap between historical data and the landscape-scale changes visible in the field along with discussing and highlighting the benefit to the HCP Covered Species:

Early funding from the PFA Grants Program acted as a catalyst for investment from other federal and state agencies and helped build a foundation for longer-term planning over consecutive grant phases.

Stop #2: Technique Demonstration & Instream Complexity

- **Location:** Widowmaker Reach (River Mile 4.0)
- **Primary Focus:** Pilot Interventions and Post-Flood System Analysis
- **Key Presenters:** Eric, Colin

Site Description & Technical Scope:

This site offers a view of the habitat degradation that occurred immediately following the historic 2020 floods when the river avulsed into an open/unshaded riffle. The discussion will focus on initial wood placement designs, the formation of structural complexity, and how these early actions informed the large-scale engineering designs implemented upstream. Riparian enhancements at this stop include solar-powered electric fencing.

This stretch demonstrates the long-term scalability of process-based interventions and validates the cost-effectiveness of unanchored wood complexes and strategic boulder placement in volatile, flashy systems.

Stop #3: Start of PFA-Funded Reach & Channel Braiding

- **Location:** Darryl Bird House (River Mile 4.3)
- **Primary Focus:** Straight Scour Pools, Active Floodplain Reconnection, and Side-Channel Activation
- **Key Presenters:** Eric

Site Description & Technical Scope:

This location marks the official downstream boundary of PFA Grant #1 (RM 4.3-6.3). This reach illustrates high-impact physical alterations to create straight scour pools with overhead cover. The Committee and guests will walk through newly activated multi-threaded perennial side channels and alcoves, observing how the river forms diverse habitat edges and slow-water, shaded nurseries for juvenile steelhead.

Private Forest Accord Program Alignment:

Directly addresses PFA core criteria regarding the creation of complex edge-effect habitats on private working lands.

Stop #4: Engineered Log Jams (ELJs) & Alluvial Fan Discussion

- **Location:** Darryl Camp Wood Jams & Road Realignment (River Mile ~5.2)
- **Primary Focus:** Process-Based Wood Loading, Lateral Scour Pools, Sinuosity
- **Key Presenters:** Eric, Colin

Site Description & Technical Scope:

A major technical highlight of the tour, this site shows how PFA funds were used to build unanchored wood structures using whole trees with intact root wads. The group will discuss the mechanics of wood-driven pool scour and the sorting of clean spawning gravels.

Private Forest Accord Program Alignment:

Illustrates risk-management frameworks for unanchored structures near private infrastructure and showcases how PFA funding drives meaningful, sustained landowner collaboration.

Stop #5: Natural Spring Enhancement & Substrate Sorting

- **Location:** Surface Spring Area (River Mile ~6.0)
- **Time:** 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM (60 Minutes)
- **Primary Focus:** Hyporheic Spring Reconnection, Thermal Refugia, and Grazing Enclosures
- **Key Presenters:** Eric

Site Description & Technical Scope:

The final stop focuses on climate resilience and thermal protections. This site features perennial surface springs that deliver groundwater into critical summer and winter holding zones. The group will also review innovative double-stacked whole tree wood enclosures built to protect establishing native cottonwood, alder, and willow stands from domestic and wild grazing pressures.

Private Forest Accord Program Alignment:

Highlights direct solutions for OREGON DEQ 303d temperature impairments, showing how PFA investments create critical cold-water climate refugia for ESA-listed Steelhead and Bull Trout.

Logistics, Accessibility & Safety Briefing

- **Activity Level & Gear:** This single-day field trip involves walking directly through an active, river corridor. Close toed shoes are required.
- **Shuttle Staging:** All Committee members will meet in the Oxford Suites Hotel Lobby (Pendleton) by 8:00 AM. Shuttles will depart promptly at 8:30 AM.
- **Meals & Refreshments:** Breakfast is not provided, the hotel has breakfast. Brown Bag lunch, field snacks, and cold beverages will be provided throughout the day in the shuttles.
- **Landowner Site Access:** The entire walking route takes place behind locked agricultural gates. The Grantee coordinates all active permissions; individual public access is restricted.
- **Public Coordination:** Members of the public are welcome but must arrange their own off-road transportation and lunches, and should contact Andy Spyrka (Andy.j.spyrka@odfw.oregon.gov) in advance due to the remote, locked nature of the tour stops.

PRIVATE FOREST ACCORD (PFA) ADVISORY COMMITTEE FIELD TRIP
Field Trip Packet Attachments

Field Stop #1: Technique Demonstration & Instream Complexity

Widowmaker River Mile 4.0

Pre-Treatment Conditions (Summer 2023)



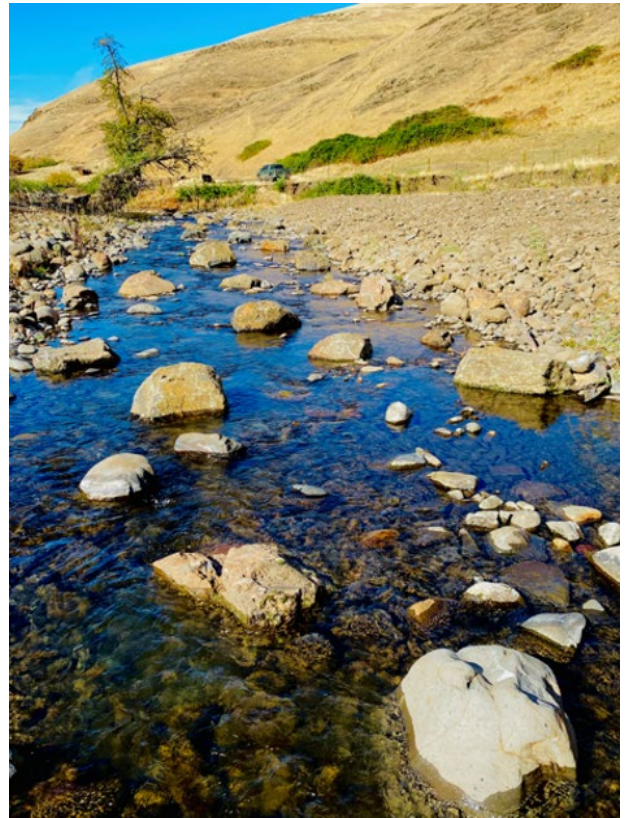
After Implementation (Fall 2023)



Riffle Treatments

Below Left: Pre-treatment conditions (Summer 2023)

Below Right: Riffle treated with boulder clusters to create pocket water (Summer 2025)



Riparian Planting

Willow trenches installed 2023



Survival and growth in 2026



Stop #2: Start of PFA Funded Reach & Channel Braiding

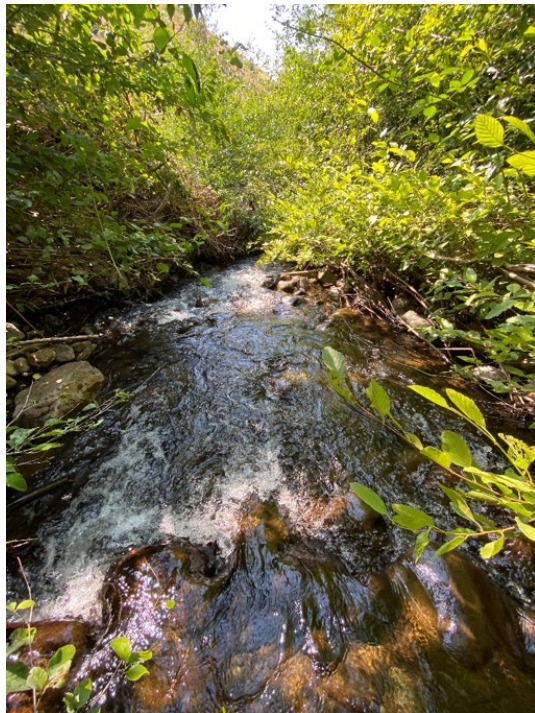
Darryl Bird House River Mile 4.3

Side Channel Activation: Aerial image during Spring 2025



Below Left: Activated side channel flowing through mature riparian forest (Summer 2025)

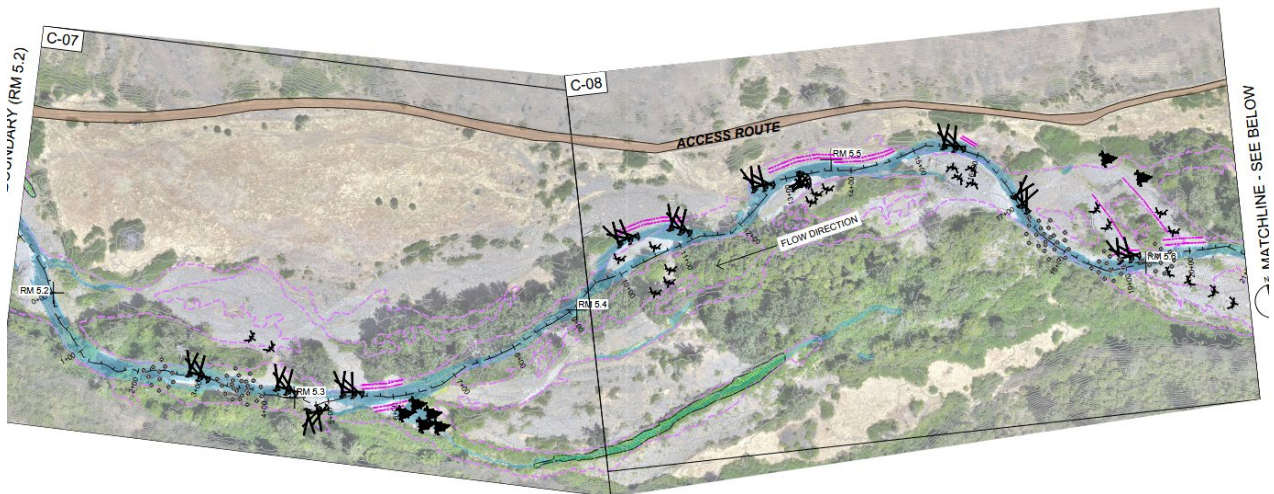
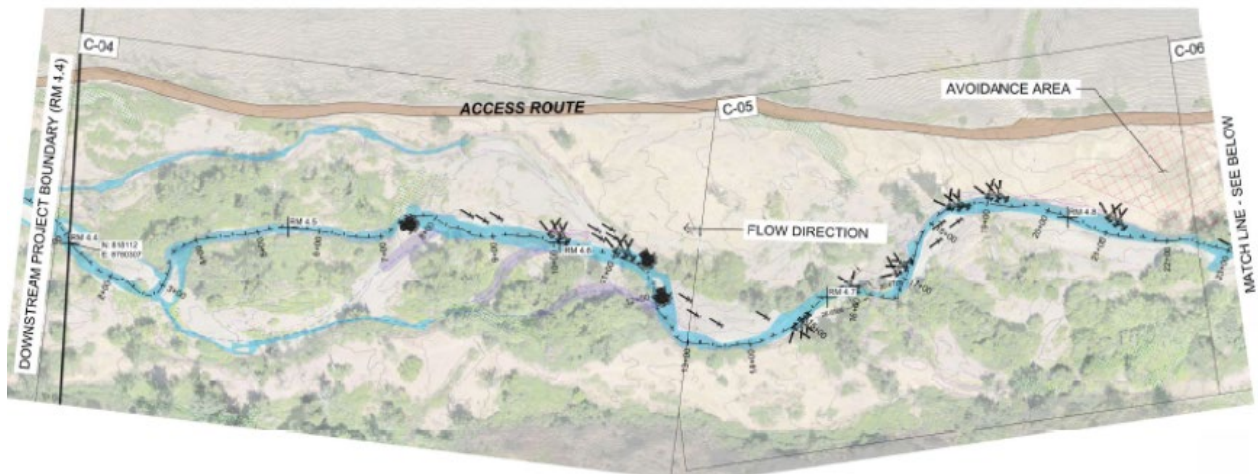
Below Right: Innovative enclosures to improve riparian vegetation



Stop #3: Engineered Log Jams (ELJs) & Alluvial Fan

Darryl Camp Wood Jams River Mile 4.7

Excerpts of Engineered Design:



Below Left: Pre-treatment conditions included long, uniform riffles (Summer 2024)

Below Right: Engineered log jams create sinuosity, pools, complexity (Summer 2024 after construction)



Below Left: ELJs during low flow conditions (Summer 2024)

Below Right: ELJs during high flow conditions (Spring 2025)

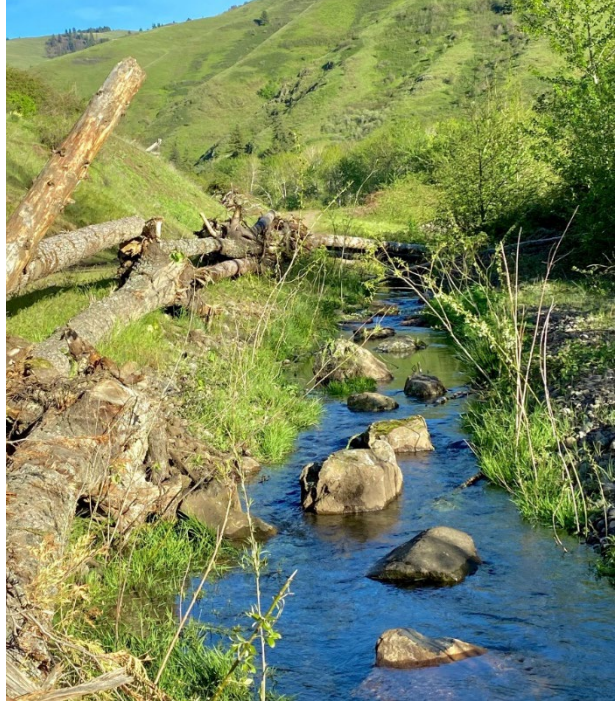


Stop #4: Natural Spring Enhancement & Substrate Sorting

Surface Spring Area River Mile 5.0

Below Left, looking downstream: Pre-treatment condition of a spring-fed channel along the road (Summer 2022)

Below Right, looking upstream: Addition of boulders, riparian trees, and livestock exclusion structures enhance this cold-water spring for juvenile salmonid rearing. (Summer 2025)



Columbia Spotted Frog

Juvenile Chinook Salmon



Increasing Floodplain Connectivity

Below Left: A high, dry terrace disconnected from the river (Summer 2024)

Below Right: A new side channel allows high flows to activate this portion of the floodplain (Fall 2024). Riparian planting is scheduled for Fall 2026.



Side Channel Activation (Spring 2025)

