

South Coyote IV, V and VI Properties

South Coyote IV, V and VI are three property acquisitions proposed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) adjacent to Fern Ridge Wildlife Area's (FRWA) South Coyote Unit. South Coyote IV (79.4 acres) is at the corner of Cantrell and Halderson roads. South Coyote V (56.74 acres) is accessed from Cantrell Road. South Coyote VI (86.3 acres) is immediately south of South Coyote Creek V and east of the South Coyote Unit. Funding to permanently acquire these properties would be provided by the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program (WWMP). This program is funded by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) through a 15-year agreement between ODFW and BPA to settle federal wildlife habitat mitigation obligations in the Willamette Valley.

If acquired, the properties would become part of Fern Ridge Wildlife Area and will be integrated into the South Coyote Unit. ODFW would grant BPA a conservation easement to protect the properties conservation values in perpetuity, and the WWMP will provide additional funding for ongoing, long term maintenance activities that will take place on the properties.

ODFW acquired the 309-acre South Coyote and 224-acre Northeast Coyote units in 2013 and 2015, respectively. More recently, ODFW acquired the 100-acre South Coyote III (2022) and 40-acre South Coyote II (2024) properties. ODFW manages the overall 5,261-acre wildlife area under a 25-year agreement with the US Army Corps of Engineers, which owns and operates Fern Ridge Reservoir.



Northwestern Pond Turtle (K. Kohl photo)

All three properties would be open to the public for hunting, wildlife viewing, and educational opportunities. All rules and restrictions that will apply to each property will be consistent with those of FRWA and a future permanent conservation easement.

This area is located within the West Eugene Area Conservation Opportunity Area (COA), as identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy. This COA includes the largest remaining wet prairie in the Willamette Valley, supporting Willamette valley bottom wetland, grassland, and riparian habitats. In addition, all three properties are within an ODFW-identified Priority Wildlife Connectivity Area. Critical connectivity between adjacent protected areas and along Coyote Creek would be maintained and enhanced with these purchases.

Examples of Proposed Habitat Restoration and Management

In 2015, management and restoration efforts on the South Coyote Unit began with oak enhancement to promote white oak health and abundance on 36 acres of riparian habitat. Enhancement and restoration work in subsequent years included 116 acres of wet prairie restoration. In 2020, 40 acres of wetland cells were retrofitted with upgraded water control structures, and another 80 acres of wet and upland prairie were restored with native plantings in 2021 and 2022. Beginning in 2023, work shifted to the Northeast Coyote Unit where ODFW is restoring 191 acres of wet and upland prairies.

These restoration efforts have yielded successful nesting populations of streaked horned larks, which are federally listed as threatened; increased usage by shorebirds, songbirds, and wintering waterfowl; increased usage by red-legged frogs and other amphibians; and an increase in native plant populations.

ODFW would improve wet prairie and flowing water and riparian habitats on these three proposed acquisitions with a focus on control of invasive non-native vegetation and native plant establishment. These sites would permanently protect and increase habitat for migrating waterfowl including Dusky Canada goose, northern red-legged frog, northwestern pond turtle, willow flycatcher, yellow-breasted chat, tufted hairgrass, meadow checker mallow, brodiaea, milkweed, camas and western buttercup.

For more information, visit <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/habitat/WWMP/index.asp>. You may also direct your questions or concerns to:

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