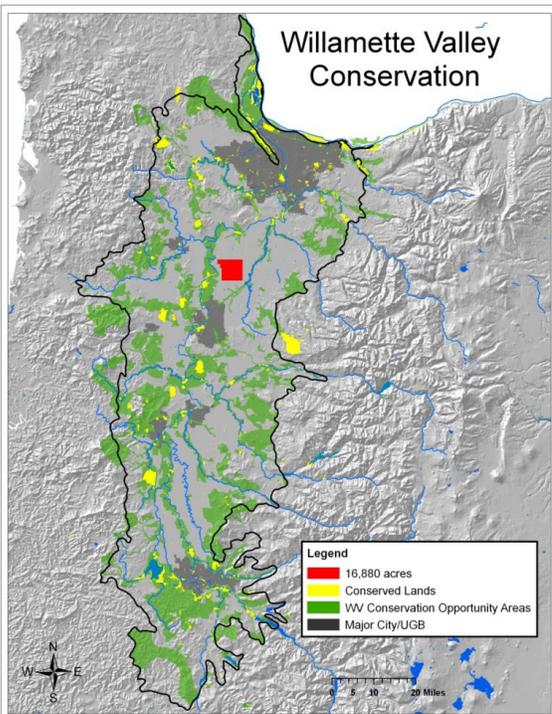


The Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program



Background:

In 2010, the State of Oregon and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) entered into a fifteen year agreement to permanently settle wildlife mitigation responsibilities for the federal Willamette River Basin Flood Control and Hydroelectric Project in the Willamette subbasin. The Willamette Project includes 13 multi-purpose dams and reservoirs as part of the Federal Columbia River Power System. The Parties to the Willamette River Basin Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Wildlife Protection and Enhancement (MOA) determined that settlement would be accomplished through the protection of an agreed number of acres that, once protected, would permanently settle the federal mitigation requirement. BPA agreed to provide specific funding amounts for the purchase of lands in fee title or conservation easement, as well as the protection and maintenance of this acreage.



Conceptual view showing the scale of land acquisition area potential under the BPA-ODFW Agreement.

The MOA established goals for mitigating the effects of the construction, inundation and operation of the Willamette River Basin Flood Control and Hydroelectric Projects. Under the terms of the MOA, Oregon and the BPA agreed to acquire at least an additional 16,880 acres of wildlife mitigation property to protect 26,537 acres (or more) by the end of 2025. To accomplish this mitigation objective the parties established the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program (WWMP), managed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).

Program Priorities:

The cumulative effect of the loss and degradation of wildlife habitat in the Willamette has included the loss of abundance and diversity of many species, culminating in severe cases in the listings of plant, wildlife, and aquatic species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The Willamette Subbasin supports 31 fish, 18 amphibian, 15 reptile, 154 bird, and 69 mammal native species. Currently, 36 of these species are listed as threatened, endangered, or as a species of significant conservation concern. The primary cause of these declines is the loss of critical habitat.

The WWMP prioritizes efforts to protect and restore wildlife habitat in the Willamette basin. ODFW will use the Oregon Conservation Strategy to form the basis for the program. Other priorities for the program include those identified in the Willamette Basin Biological Opinions, the Willamette Subbasin Plan, and also Recovery Plans for terrestrial and aquatic Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed species.

Projects funded through the WWMP should include the following goals:

- Protecting wildlife habitats with significant cultural values;
- Cost-sharing to ensure the WWMP can meet or exceed acreage objectives;
- Partnerships to enhance the likelihood of successful project completion;
- Providing public access on properties, consistent with conservation values of the property; and
- Encouraging the use of Ecosystem Services Markets.

Funding information:

BPA has agreed to fund acquisition through a set schedule of funding, totaling \$117,864,424 from 2011-2025. Program partners will also pursue cost sharing and other efficiencies so that the funds provided under the MOA could result in acquiring more than 16,880 additional acres during the project term. Any non-BPA funding that contributes to implementation of a project funded by BPA under this Agreement is in addition to (and not a substitute for) the funding from BPA by this Agreement.

Additional funding of \$26,226,440 is provided over the course of the MOA and devoted to development and implementation of an operations and monitoring program within ODFW, which will focus on the long term protection of habitat and habitat function and will develop programs to monitor habitat and species response on properties protected.

Project development:

ODFW will solicit project proposals on an annual basis. Projects should meet identified WWMP priorities. Once submitted, projects will be reviewed by a technical review team to be scored and ranked according to the WWMP's Project Selection Criteria, available on the website below. Following the technical review, proposed projects are reviewed by a stakeholder group, the Willamette Advisory Group. Following their review, the ODFW Director recommends a final project list to BPA for funding.



ODFW staff will assist sponsors with project identification and development. Please contact any of the WWMP staff or other key ODFW staff listed below for assistance with project development or questions about the WWMP.

For more information:

Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program website: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/willamette_wmp/index.asp

Oregon Conservation Strategy website: <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/index.asp>

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