



# Upper Grande Ronde Initiative

Upper Grande Ronde River,  
Northeastern Oregon



## Partnership Overview

The Upper Grande Ronde Initiative works to improve habitat for fish in the upper Grande Ronde River and Catherine Creek watersheds, including spring Chinook salmon, summer steelhead, and bull trout. These fish need high quality habitat for all the different stages of their development – from egg to juvenile to adult. High-quality floodplains help maintain and enhance fish habitat and watershed conditions. These outcomes are also important to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the communities within the subbasin and the Pacific Northwest.

In January 2016, the Upper Grande Ronde Initiative was awarded funding for implementation through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board's (OWEB) Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) grant program. A FIP is an OWEB investment that addresses a board-identified priority of significance to the state, achieves clear and measurable ecological outcomes, uses integrated and results-oriented approaches as identified through a strategic action plan, and is implemented by a high-performing partnership.

Initiatives are eligible for up to 6 years of OWEB funding. For the 2017-2019 biennium, OWEB has awarded the partnership \$2,416,500 for habitat restoration projects and related conservation work. When combined with investments from 2015 – 2021, the anticipated total investment is approximately \$6,965,110.

## Core Implementing Partners

- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Grande Ronde Model Watershed
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Union Soil and Water Conservation District
- US Forest Service



Spring Chinook (ODFW)





Healthy stream channel, Upper Grande Ronde Basin

### Strategy

Create aquatic habitat in areas where habitat was previously blocked or lost due to channel straightening, draining and/or filling wetlands, and removing beavers

#### Conservation Action

- Acres of Habitat Created
- Pools Created
- Barriers Removed

#### Intermediate Ecological Outcome

- Fish and aquatic species use the newly created aquatic habitat
- Increased numbers of spring Chinook, summer steelhead, bull trout, and other native aquatic species

#### Long-Term Ecological Outcome

Thriving populations of spring Chinook, summer steelhead, bull trout, and other native aquatic species throughout Upper Grande Ronde watersheds

### Strategy

Restore flow during critical periods

#### Conservation Action

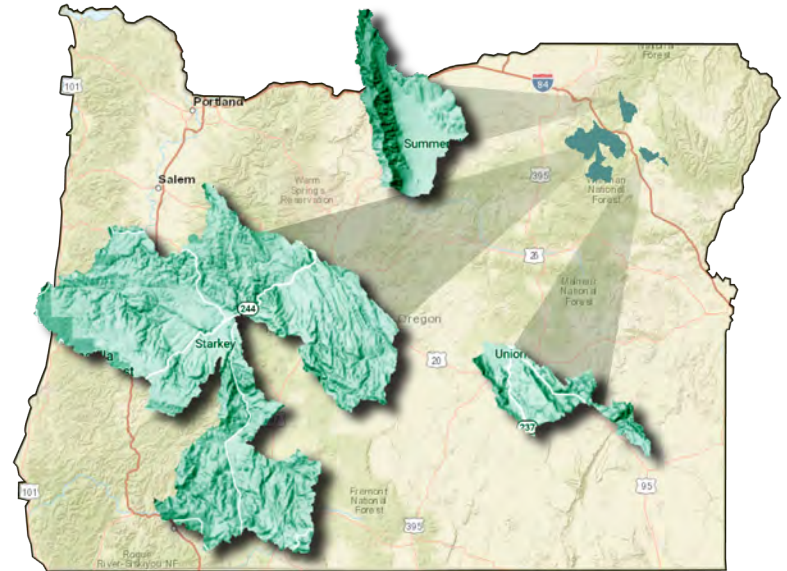
- Irrigation efficiency projects
- Purchase or lease of water from willing water rights holders

#### Intermediate Ecological Outcome

- Higher late season flow results in more water in stream channels
- Increases in late season flow
- Reduced summer stream temperatures

#### Long-Term Ecological Outcome

- Improved access to aquatic habitat for fish and aquatic species
- Increase in spatial distribution of fish species throughout Upper Grande Ronde watersheds



### Strategy

Restore natural habitat complexity and processes, improving floodplain function

#### Conservation Action

- Construct large wood structures, side channels, and pools
- Plant a diverse community of riparian vegetation

#### Intermediate Ecological Outcome

- Increased habitat complexity and bank stabilization
- Reduced sedimentation rates
- Reduced stream temperatures
- Increased water table

#### Long-Term Ecological Outcome

- Improved stream channel structure and form, providing critical rearing, holding and spawning habitat for aquatic species
- Increased reproductive success of aquatic species

### Strategy

Engage landowners and residents in restoration efforts throughout Upper Grande Ronde watersheds

#### Conservation Action

- Community outreach events
- Presentations to community and civic groups, partner activities, and agricultural meetings

#### Intermediate Ecological Outcome

- Enhanced trust and partnerships with private landowners and public land managers
- New working relationships among landowners
- Increased awareness and engagement in restoration activities on private lands

#### Long-Term Ecological Outcome

Ecological outcomes are weighed as decisions are made about land use and land management