

JOHN DAY BASIN NATIVE FISH INITIATIVE



Partnership Overview

The John Day River basin covers over 8,100 square miles and hosts two of the last remaining intact wild anadromous fish populations of summer steelhead and spring Chinook in the Columbia River System. Providing this important habitat for iconic native fish makes the John Day basin one of the most important undammed river systems in the West. Partners convening to implement the John Day Basin Native Fish Habitat Initiative share a vision: Clean water and healthy watersheds sufficient to provide for the ecological, economic, and cultural well-being of the John Day River Basin.

Quick Facts

OWEB Investment: \$12.0 million
Estimated Leverage: \$22.22 million
Goals by 2025:

- Increasing rearing habitat and productivity in summer steelhead and spring Chinook
- Increasing trend in summer instream flow
- Decreasing trend in summer instream water temperature

In January 2019, the John Day Basin Native Fish Initiative was awarded funding 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.

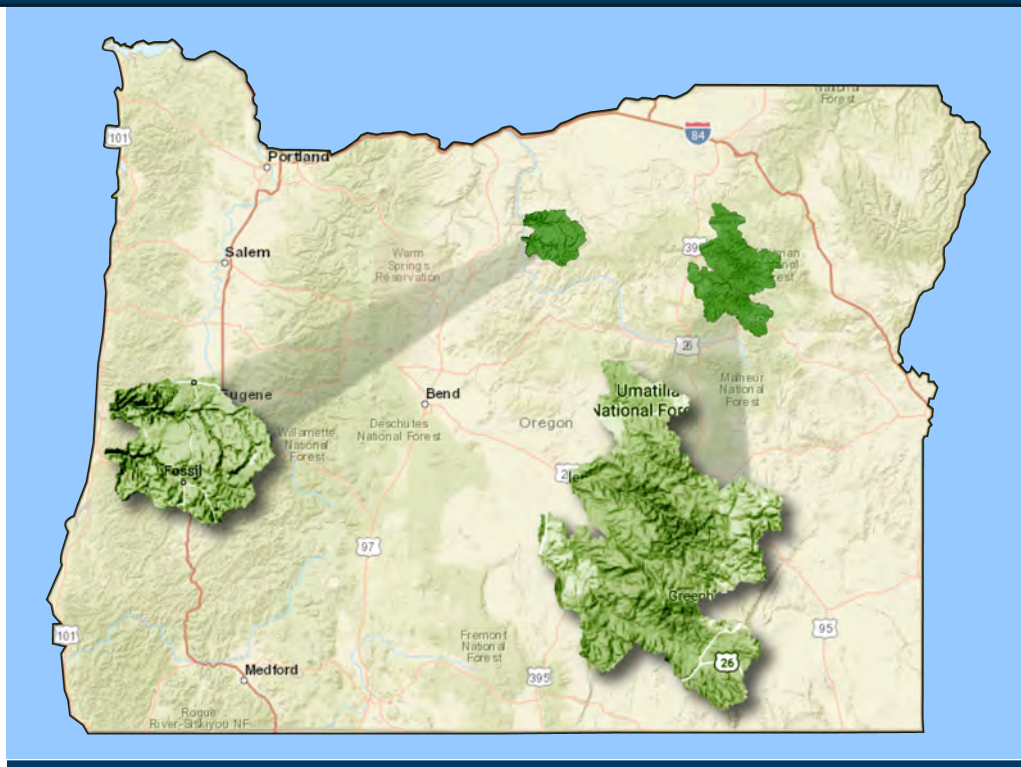
Initiatives are eligible for up to six years of OWEB funding. For the 2019-2021 biennium, OWEB awarded \$4,000,000. When combined with investments from 2019 to 2025, the anticipated total investment is approximately \$12,000,000.

Core Implementing Partners

- Blue Mountain Forest Partners
- Blue Mountain Land Trust
- Bonneville Power Administration
- Burns Paiute Tribe
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon
- Gilliam County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD)
- Gilliam East John Day Watershed Council (WC)
- Grant SWCD
- Mid John Day-Bridge Creek WC
- Monument SWCD
- North Fork John Day WC
- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Oregon Department of Parks & Recreation
- Ritter Land Management Team
- Sherman County SWCD
- South Fork John Day WC
- The Freshwater Trust
- The Nature Conservancy
- Trout Unlimited
- USDA Forest Service: Malheur, Umatilla, and Willowa-Whitman National Forests
- USDI Bureau of Land Management
- USDI Bureau of Reclamation
- Wheeler County SWCD

Ecological Outcomes

The John Day Basin Native Fish Habitat Initiative brings together partners throughout the basin with a common interest in restoring watersheds to enhance native fish populations, while at the same time maintaining healthy working landscapes and thriving local communities. The Initiative builds on deep local knowledge and science in the basin, identifying specific actions that restore ridge-to-ridge ecosystem functions. Ecological outcomes are anticipated within the FIP timeframe and over the longer term, benefitting ESA-listed summer steelhead and bull trout, as well as spring Chinook and other native fish.



Strategies and anticipated results in the John Day Basin Native Fish Habitat Initiative include:

Strategy

Implement restoration actions that will enhance streams, riparian areas, and upland habitats. Implementing partners have prioritized objectives for watersheds within the larger John Day Basin geography.

Conservation Action

- Reconnect floodplains by restoring floodplain topography and vegetation
- Increase riparian plant communities through fencing, planting, installing off-channel water, and/or invasive species control
- Improve channel connectivity and complexity through beaver restoration management and large wood placement
- Remove and/or replace barriers to fish passage
- Enhance water quantity and quality by leasing or purchasing instream flow

Intermediate Ecological Outcome

Improved trends in water temperature and summer base flows in high priority watersheds within the larger John Day Basin

Long-Term Ecological Outcome

- Long-term trend of increasing fish populations per local, state, federal, and tribal plans

Strategy

Ensure that work under the John Day Basin Native Fish Habitat Initiative visibly contributes to healthy economy and community for those who live, work or visit the John Day region.

Conservation Action

- Community outreach events
- Presentations to community and civic groups, partner activities, and landowner meetings
- Generate increased partner cooperation, project prioritization, and joint fundraising among diverse interests in the John Day River Basin
- Conduct public outreach on watershed restoration that is taking place and its value to the community

Intermediate Ecological Outcome

Increased awareness and engagement in restoration activities on private lands

A majority of the local community understands watershed restoration progress and its value

Positive economic impacts connected to the Initiative

Long-Term Ecological Outcome

- Increased awareness of high impact projects that meet both ecological and local community needs
- Ecological outcomes are weighed as decisions are made about land use and land management, ensuring strong and continued progress towards outcomes