

HOOD RIVER BASIN AQUATIC HABITAT RESTORATION INITIATIVE



Photos credit: Hood River Basin Partnership



Partnership Overview

The Hood River Basin Partnership works towards increased productivity of salmon, steelhead, lamprey, and other resident native fish in the watershed, increased instream and floodplain habitat diversity and complexity, increased instream habitat availability, increased instream habitat quality, and increased support and actions by community members for aquatic habitat and conservation. Initiative funding will focus on the highest priority irrigation delivery and on-farm water conservation projects, instream and floodplain habitat restoration, stakeholder engagement, restoration design, and project effectiveness monitoring.

Goals by 2030:

- Design and implement at least 14 instream habitat projects, including over 7 miles of large wood placement
- Restore at least one mile of riparian habitat
- Reconnect/restore at least three miles of side channel habitat
- Reconnect approximately 25 acres of floodplain habitat
- Eliminate over 6 miles of open canals and at least 35 end-spills associated with pipeline projects to improve water quality
- Achieve water savings of at least 18.6 cfs

In April 2024, the Hood River Basin Partnership was awarded funding through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (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 first biennium, OWEB awarded \$2,933,414 to the Hood River Basin Partnership. When combined with investments from 2024 to 2030, the anticipated total investment is approximately \$10,140,242.

Core Implementing Partners

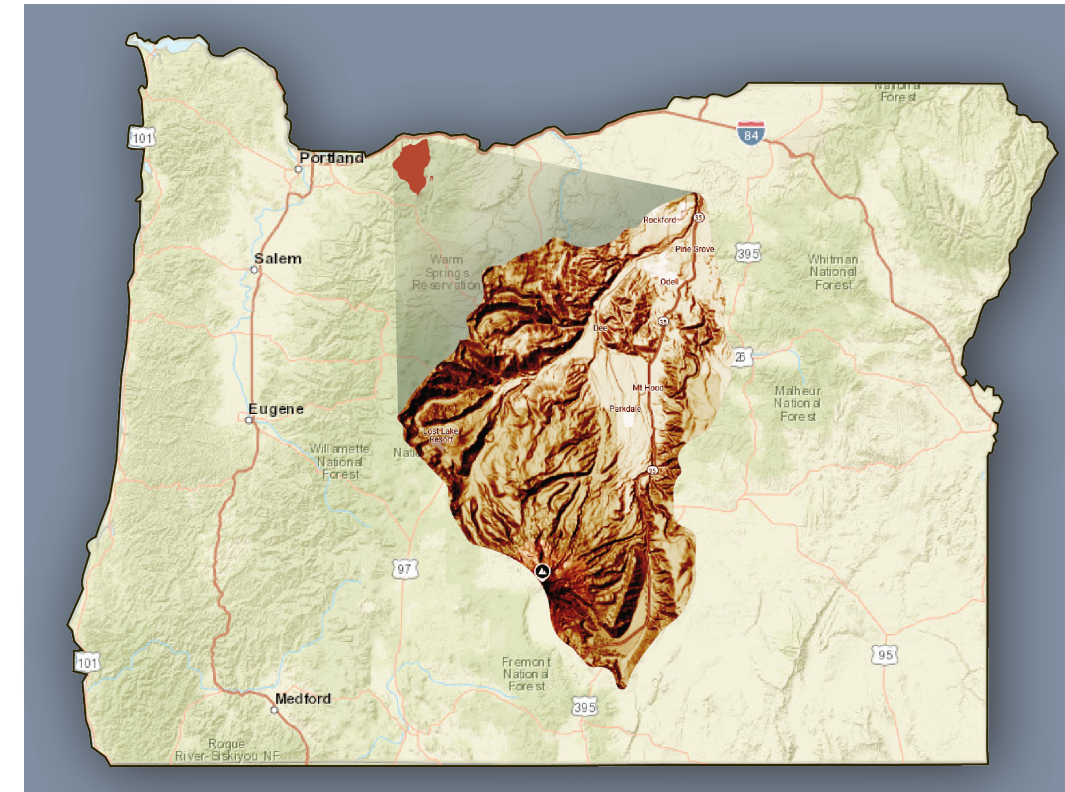
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
- East Fork Irrigation District
- Farmers Irrigation District
- Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District
- Hood River Watershed Group
- Middle Fork Irrigation District
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- US Forest Service, Hood River Ranger District



Ecological Outcomes

The initiative's conservation actions will address several known limiting factors:

- 1) Reduced instream habitat diversity and complexity primarily from loss of large wood, disconnection from former floodplains and side channels, historic logging practices, and alteration of riparian zones;
- 2) Reduced instream habitat quantity primarily from lower summer streamflows and disconnection from former floodplains and side channels; and
- 3) Water quality degradation primarily from pesticides and higher stream temperatures.



Strategy 1

Restore Instream Habitat Complexity and Diversity

Conservation Actions

- Strategic large wood placement
- Reconnect side channels and floodplain
- Riparian restoration

Irrigation upgrades improve water delivery, reduce runoff, and conserve water consumption.



Strategy 2

Increase and Protect Summer Streamflow

Conservation Actions

- Focus on summer irrigation efficiency including conveyance system upgrades, on-farm irrigation water management
- Improve residential water use conservation

Strategy 3

Improve Water Quality (summer stream temperature, stream pesticide concentrations)

Conservation Actions

- Plant and establish native riparian vegetation to improve shade and vegetative buffers
- Train pesticide applicators to apply pesticides efficiently throughout targeted area

Near-term Ecological Outcomes

- Increased number of stream miles treated with large wood
- Increased miles of side channel and floodplain reconnection
- Increased instream flow protected
- Increased miles of irrigation pipeline installed, end spills eliminated, miles of livestock exclusion fence installed, and on-farm irrigation upgrades
- Increased riparian area planted
- Number of workshops, trainings, tours, outreach materials circulated
- Increased number of new landowners engaged

Longer-term Ecological Outcomes

- Increased productivity of salmon, steelhead, lamprey and other native resident fish in watershed
- Increased instream habitat quality, diversity, complexity, and availability for salmon, steelhead, lamprey, and other native resident fish
- Increased support and actions by community members for aquatic habitat and conservation