

OREGON Watershed Enhancement Board



2018-2028 Strategic Plan

Quarterly Report to the Board | July 2024



Mission: To help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies.



Priority 1

Broad awareness of the relationship between people and watersheds



Representatives from NOAA, OWEB, BLM, USFS, and TFT attended the tour.

Representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) joined OWEB, BLM, USFS, and The Freshwater Trust (TFT) to **tour projects in the Sandy River basin.**

Layered funding has provided the Sandy River Basin Partners an opportunity to target specific scales and scopes of habitat restoration for Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed coho salmon, Chinook salmon, and steelhead in the basin for over 15 years and create community resilience to downstream flooding.

Contributions include:

- Through NOAA Fisheries’ Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF), OWEB contributed nearly \$400,000 from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and \$300,000 in state matching funds to improve habitat conditions on two critical tributaries.
- Approximately \$1 million the Office of Habitat Conservation’s (OHC) Restoration Center awarded to TFT through the Community-based Restoration Program in 2020.



Investments have improved habitat conditions on two critical tributaries.



Priority 2

Leaders at all levels of watershed work reflect the diversity of Oregonians



The City of Portland provides free trainings and workshops for communication, mediation, and facilitation training. Credit: City of Portland.gov

OWEB leadership and staff attended a workshop “Constructing Civic Dialogues.” The **workshop focused on how to empower leaders to foster a psychologically safe environment** so that staff can be empowered to do their best work, be genuine and authentic, and to problem solve, speak up, and innovate.

OWEB’s leadership **met with several new, and developing partners** in the last quarter, including:

- The Senior program officer in the [Our Resilient Places](#) program area with Meyer Memorial Trust.
- The founder and project director, board members, and volunteers at [Elderberry Wisdom Farm](#), a Native American nonprofit organization located in rural Marion County.
- The Director of the [OSU Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems](#).
- Policy Director for the [Oregon Hunters Association](#).



OSU Small Farms and Community Food Systems programs provide resources provide education and resources to students and communities.



Priority 3

Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds



OAHP presentation at Connect +.

Conservation partners and OWEB staff engaged in the Oregon Conservation Education and Assistance Network **CONNECT+ conference**. OCEAN/CONNECT is a place to exchange ideas in Oregon’s conservation issues. Sessions included engagement, upland conservation, water, working lands, weeds, and organizational management.

OWEB staff prepared and presented at several sessions, including:

- Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program
- Water Acquisitions Grant Program
- National Historic Preservation Act
- OWEB’s Online Grant Management System

OWEB continues to **prepare for new, pending requirements under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)**. Meetings were held with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian reservation to discuss the implementation of NHPA requirements. OWEB also met with several federal agencies (BPA, USFS, USFWS, BLM) to discuss implementation.

Implementation

What types of projects are impacted

- 1 Projects that are funded (regardless of when the application was submitted) after the Programmatic Agreement goes into effect, likely October 2024.
- 2 Projects that are funded with PCSRF funds.
- 3 Projects that are eligible for PCSRF but funded with Lottery and OWEB uses to meet its **match** requirement for the PCSRF grant.

Slide from NHPA presentation.



Priority 4

Watershed organizations have access to a diverse and stable funding portfolio

BLM Good Neighbor Authority Fund
79 Projects | \$23,644,640 Total Funding

Background
OWEB and BLM first entered into a cooperative agreement in 2010 to facilitate implementation of aquatic restoration, technical assistance and monitoring projects with partners. BLM staff select projects based on statewide and local priorities and OWEB manages the application and grants through its long standing and consistent grant making processes. To date, BLM has awarded over \$10 million in federal funds and OWEB has entered into grant agreements to support the projects developed between local partners and BLM staff. This collaboration between BLM and OWEB has proven to be a successful way to increase capacity at the federal, state and local level and maximize efficiency to get projects implemented on the ground to help sustain the health, diversity and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

How the Funds are Used with OWEB

Funding by Fund Type	Amount	Percentage
Funded	\$7,999,000	34%
Not Funded	\$15,645,640	66%

OWEB - BLM Good Neighbor handout.

OWEB staff **presented on SB 1561 (Monsanto Settlement Agreement)** to an audience at the ODFW Conservation Open House. When up and running, funding will be made available to organizations looking to implement restoration projects consistent with the terms of the settlement agreement.

Staff attended the **2024 BLM Oregon and Washington Aquatics Program Training** in Klamath Falls to provide information about OWEB’s grant-making process, project development guidance, grant agreement conditions and quantifying conservation outcomes for the BLM Good Neighbor Authority grant program.

Staff provided a [handout](#) highlighting projects, how funds are used & projects funded to date, the history of the agreement and a map of project locations to date. The handout was well received, BLM requested additional trainings, and noted the importance of partnering with OWEB to be able to get funding on the ground throughout Oregon.



Priority 5

The value of working lands is fully integrated into watershed health



Map of monitoring stations in the combined Sprague SIA.

OWEB continues to work with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to provide Strategic Implementation Area (SIA) grants. SIAs are watersheds where several state agencies collaborate with local partners to address agricultural water quality improvement opportunities..

- In May, **OWEB and other natural resources agencies reviewed and recommended funding for four new SIAs.**
- In June, OWEB convened a technical review team for SIA monitoring proposals. The proposals meet important local data needs and are developed in collaboration with the DEQ and ODFW.
- Additionally, OWEB worked with ODA to fund several pilot Restoration grants for on-the-ground projects identified by past SIA activities.



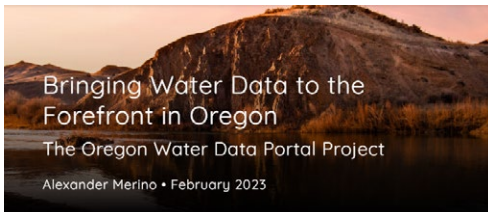
OAHP Rules on Oregon Secretary of State webpage.

Rulemaking for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) was authorized at the April board meeting and is now underway. [OAHP Rulemaking Advisory Committee](#) members are Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commissioners who will assist OWEB in updating administrative rules that define program administration requirements.



Priority 6

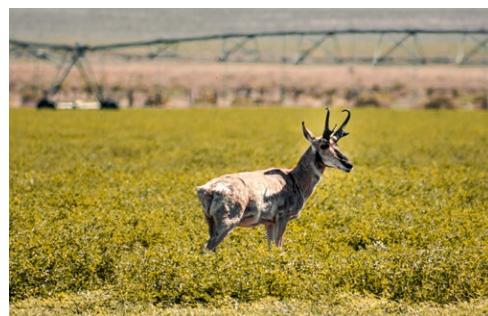
Coordinated monitoring and shared learning to advance watershed restoration effectiveness



Bringing Water Data to the Forefront in Oregon
The Oregon Water Data Portal Project
Alexander Merino • February 2023

A PDF of the [Oregon Water Data Portal Project](#) may be found on the Internet of Water Coalition website.

In April 2024, the [Internet of Water \(IoW\)](#) hosted its second Technology Adoption Program (TAP) engagement in Oregon, aimed at advancing the Oregon Water Data Portal (OWDP). TAP is an initiative designed to **establish a unified access point for all public water and infrastructure data in Oregon.** TAP is a participatory process to assist public agencies in modernizing how water data is managed, shared, and deployed.



Pronghorn at Trout Creek Meadows.

Monitoring Land Acquisition projects began in Spring 2024. Project areas include the Willamette Valley, Southern Oregon, Central Oregon, and Eastern Oregon. Over the next three years, expert contractors will coordinate with grantees to ensure compliance with conservation easements and assess how well each property is performing on the intended outcomes described in their grant applications.



Priority 7

Bold and innovative actions to achieve health in Oregon's watersheds



OWEB led the application development process for [Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Funding](#), receiving a total award of **\$22,250,000**, the largest award in the history of Oregon's participation in the program.



The [Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council's](#) Lamson Habitat Side Channel Entrance Construction Project converted a dry side channel to perennial flow.



OWEB staff and members of the Bonneville Environmental Foundation Team that assist in the development and effectiveness of the **Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) program met to discuss key elements** of FIP, and how the [upcoming rulemaking](#) and review of the board-identified priorities will shape the direction of the program.

Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network site visit, 2022.



 accomplishments
 highlighted in quarterly update










 October
 January
 April
 July

Strategies Chart April-July 2024

1 Broad awareness of the relationship between people and watersheds

1.1 Develop and implement broad awareness campaigns and highlight personal stories to tell the economic, restoration, and community successes of watershed investments.				
1.2 Increase involvement of non-traditional partners in strategic watershed approaches.				









2 Leaders at all levels of watershed work reflect the diversity of Oregonians

2.1 Listen, learn and gather information about diverse populations.				
2.2 Create new opportunities to expand the conservation table.				
2.3 Develop funding strategies with a lens toward diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)				


















3 Community capacity and strategic partnerships achieve healthy watersheds

3.1 Evaluate and identify lessons learned from OWEB's past capacity funding.				
3.2 Champion best approaches to build organizational, community and partnership capacity.				
3.3 Accelerate state/federal agency participation in partnerships.				
























4 Watershed organizations have access to a diverse and stable funding portfolio

4.1 Increase coordination of public restoration investments and develop funding vision.				
4.2 Align common investment areas with private foundations.				
4.3 Explore creative funding opportunities and partnerships with the private sector.				
4.4 Partner to design strategies for complex conservation issues that can only be solved by seeking new and creative funding sources.				

5 The value of working lands is fully integrated into watershed health

5.1 Implement the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program.				
5.2 Strengthen engagement with a broad base of working landowners.				
5.3 Enhance the work of partners to increase working lands projects on farm, ranch and forestlands.				
5.4 Support technical assistance to work with owners/managers of working lands.				
5.5 Develop engagement strategies for owners and managers of working lands who may not currently work with local organizations.				

6 Coordinated monitoring and shared learning to advance watershed restoration effectiveness

6.1 Broadly communicate restoration outcomes and impacts.				
6.2 Invest in monitoring over the long term.				
6.3 Develop guidance and technical support for monitoring.				
6.4 Increase communication between and among scientists and practitioners.				
6.5 Define monitoring priorities.				
6.6 Develop and promote a monitoring framework.				

7 Bold and innovative actions to achieve health in Oregon's watersheds

7.1 Invest in landscape restoration over the long term.				
7.2 Develop investment approaches in conservation that support healthy communities and strong economics.				
7.3 Foster experimentation that aligns with OWEB's mission.				