

Landowner Assistance Programs for Conservation Work

Land Easement and Retirement programs

NRCS: Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

The program provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agriculture. There are three enrollment options: *Permanent Easement*, a *30-year Easement*, and *Restoration Cost-Share Agreement*.

For more information on this NRCS-administered program, go to: www.or.nrcs.usda.gov.

FSA: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

CREP is a program that helps agricultural producers protect environmentally sensitive land, decrease erosion, and restore wildlife habitat, and safeguard ground and surface water. By using a partnership between producers, tribal, state and federal governments, sensitive areas are enrolled under a 10 to 15-year rental agreement to keep lands out of agricultural production. CREP provides payments to participants who offer eligible land. See www.fsa.usda.gov for more information as this is a Farm Service Agency administered program.

Natural Resource Protection/Enhancement

OWEB: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board grant program

OWEB provides a variety of grants. Project types include restoration, land acquisitions, education/outreach, technical assistance, and local innovation. All grants require at least 25% match. Grant application deadlines vary by project type; check OWEB's website at <http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB/GRANTS> for detailed information and applications.

OWEB's Small Grant Program is designed for on-the-ground restoration projects. Grants up to \$10,000 are available, with a 25% match. Applications can be submitted six times a year, and are evaluated by a local review team. Applications and information on the small grant program can be obtained from the Hood River SWCD at Jordan@hoodriverswcd.org or call (541) 386-4588.

NRCS: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Farmers and ranchers may receive financial and technical help to install or implement structural and management conservation practices on eligible agricultural land. Contracts can be 1 to 10 years in length with a cost share of approximately 50% (in specific cases up to 75%).

A sub-category to EQIP is the Conservation Innovation Grants. These are competitive grant awards to stimulate innovative approaches to environmental enhancement and protection, in conjunction with agricultural production. For more information, go to:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip/>

NRCS: Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

CSP rewards those who already act as model conservationists rather than helping producers to fix resource problems. It also pays qualified producers to do further environmental enhancements. For more information, go to: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/

ODFW: Wildlife Habitat Conservation and Management Program (WHCMP)-

WHCMP is a cooperative effort involving state and local governments and other partners to help private landowners voluntarily conserve native wildlife habitat. The Oregon Legislature created the habitat program to offer an incentive for private landowners who want to provide wildlife habitat on their properties instead of, or in addition to, farming, growing timber or other land uses. Under the habitat program, land subject to an approved wildlife habitat conservation and management plan receives a wildlife habitat special assessment, where property taxes are assessed at the relatively low value that

would apply if the land were being farmed or used for commercial forestry. This program is available to landowners both urban and rural land that is clearly identifiable as containing significant wildlife habitat. For more information contact the local ODFW field office at 541-296-4628 or check the ODFW website at www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/whcmp/

USFWS: Partners for Fish & Wildlife (PFW) -

This USFWS program can provide up to 50% of the cost, with a maximum of \$25,000 per project, for work that improves habitat for fish and wildlife that are listed on the Endangered Species Act, or are proposed for listing. Project types include restoring fish passage, screening diversions, riparian restoration, fencing, off-stream water troughs and wetlands restoration. The program also funds improvements to habitat used by migratory songbirds and other non-aquatic wildlife. For more information go to the website at: www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/ToolsForLandowners/Partners/Details.asp or contact the program coordinator CalLee Davenport (503) 231-6179 or CalLee_Davenport@fws.gov

Forest Stewardship Program –

This ODF program provides a 75% cost share reimbursement for development of a forest management plan. Cost-share must be approved by ODF *prior* to creation of stewardship plan. There is a 10 acre minimum; contact the ODF office in The Dalles at 541-296-4626 for more information.

Forest Resource Trust (FRT) –

This ODF program provides 100% financial assistance for reforestation of under-productive land. The landowner commits to a long-term contract and repaying the loan at the time of future harvest. There is a 10 acre minimum; contact the ODF office in The Dalles at 541-296-4626 for more information.

ODF: Bark Beetle Mitigation (BBM) –

This Oregon Dept. of Forestry program provides cost-share funds for pre-commercial thinning, slash treatment and burning of overstocked conifer stands susceptible to, or showing signs of, bark beetle infestation. There is a 10 acre minimum; contact the ODF office in The Dalles at 541-296-4626 for more information.

National Fire Plan Grants -

This program provides funds for wildland fuels treatment adjacent to structures as well as surrounding landscape. Grant funds are only available for specified treatment areas potentially in Wasco or Hood River County. Contact the ODF office in The Dalles at 541-296-4626 for more information.

Instream and Streamside Improvements

CTWS: Habitat Restoration Projects

The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation (CTWS) is actively restoring fisheries resources in the Hood River basin. They can provide funding and technical assistance for a variety of projects such as irrigation system upgrades, riparian fencing, fish screen upgrades, and instream / riparian habitat improvement projects. The focus is on waterways with anadromous (ocean-going) fish species. Tribal staff can assist with project planning and implementation. The local contact for this program is Blayne Eineichner at (541) 352-9326 and beineichner@hrecn.net.

ODFW: Fish Screening and Passage Program – Marty Olson, The Dalles Screen Shop

Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife may provide up to 60% of eligible project costs when installing a fish screen, up to \$75,000 per project. An Oregon State tax credit may also be available for projects that qualify. Dam removal and fish passage projects may also qualify for funding. Typically fish screen maintenance or culvert replacement projects do not receive funding from this program. Applications are accepted at any time, but a contract must be established before funds can be spent on project work. ODFW can accept federal funds as applicant match funding to help with the cost-share; it is preferable to

have the water user put in at least 10% of the match. The local contact for the program is Marty Olson at the Screen Shop in The Dalles at (541) 296-8026 or Martin.P.Olson@state.or.us.

ODFW: Riparian Lands Tax Incentive

The Riparian Lands Tax Incentive Program offers a property tax incentive to property owners for improving or maintaining qualifying riparian lands. Under this program, property owners receive complete property tax exemption for their riparian property. This can include land up to 100 feet from a stream. A landowner and ODFW must sign a riparian management plan and agreement. A management plan must detail measures the landowner will implement to preserve, enhance or restore the riparian area. For more information, contact program coordinator Joy Vaughan, 503-947-6089 or visit the website at www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/tax_overview.asp.

OWRD: Instream Leasing and Conserved Water Program

The Oregon Water Resources Department's (OWRD) Instream Leasing Program provides a voluntary means to aid the restoration and protection of stream flows. This arrangement provides benefits both to water right holders and to instream values by providing water users with options that protect their water rights while leasing water for instream benefits. Water users who are at risk of forfeiture of their water rights due to non-use may find instream leases to be a good management option. Instream water rights provide flows for fish and wildlife, scenic values, and improved water quality. For more information contact Bob Wood at 541-506-2652 Robert.L.Wood@wr.d.state.or.us

The Conserved Water Program allows a water user who conserves water to use a portion of the conserved water on additional lands, lease or sell the water, or dedicate the water to instream use. The Conserved Water Program allows water users to use up to 75% of the saved water, if at least 25% is left instream. The local contact for OWRD is Water master Bob Wood, 541-506-2652 or Robert.L.Wood@wr.d.state.or.us.

DEQ: Nonpoint Source Pollution 319 Grants

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) accepts proposals from government agencies, tribal nations and nonprofit organizations to address non-point sources of pollution affecting coastal, river, lake, drinking and ground-water resources of the state. The application period runs from early September through October each year. Nonpoint source water quality and watershed enhancement projects should address the priorities in the Oregon Water Quality Nonpoint Source Management Plan. For more information go to: www.deq.state.or.us/WQ/nonpoint/grants.htm or contact Ivan Camacho 503-229-5088 or camacho.ivan@deq.state.or.us

Recommendations for where to look first for project funding:

Streamside Fencing

- CTWS – Contact Joe McCanna at (541) 352-9326
- OWEB - Small Grant Program. Contact Jordan Kim or Kris Schaedel at the Hood River SWCD at (541) 386-4588
- CREP – Contact Carly Heron at Hood River NRCS office at (541) 386-2815 or Kevin McIntyre at The Dalles NRCS office at (541) 296-6178
- WHIP – Contact Carly Heron at the Hood River NRCS office at (541) 386-2815

Manure Management

- EQIP - Contact Carly Heron at the Hood River NRCS office at (541) 386-2815
- OWEB - Small Grant Program. Contact Jordan Kim at the Hood River SWCD at (541) 386-4588

Culvert Upgrades

- CTWS – If the culvert is on a stream used by salmon and steelhead.

Contact Joe McCanna at (541) 352-9326

- OWEB - Large Grant Program. Contact Cindy Thieman at the Hood River Watershed Group (541) 386-6063 or OWEB at <http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB/GRANTS> for detailed information and applications.

Fish Screens for Water Diversions

- ODFW – The Dalles screen shop for small diversions. Contact Marty Olsen at (541) 296-8026 or Martin.P.Olson@state.or.us

This list is by no means comprehensive, but meant to help interested landowners and agencies by directing them to potential sources of funding for a variety of watershed restoration projects. Other agencies and the internet can provide additional information.

(Updated by Kris Schaedel 2/25/14)

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