



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** OWEB Grants Committee, March 12, 2024

**FROM:** Eric Williams, Grant Program Manager  
Denise Hoffert, Partnerships Coordinator  
Jillian McCarthy, Partnerships Coordinator  
Audrey Hatch, Conservation Outcomes Coordinator  
Eric Hartstein, Senior Policy Coordinator

**SUBJECT:** Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) 2023-2025 Solicitation-Grants Committee Interviews and Recommendations  
[March 12, 2024, OWEB Grants Committee Meeting](#)

### I. Background

A Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) is an OWEB investment that addresses a board-identified focused investment priority of significance to the state; achieves clear and measurable ecological outcomes; uses integrated, results-oriented approaches as identified through a strategic action plan; and is implemented by a high-performing partnership.

FIP funding supports partnerships in pursuing conservation initiatives with up to \$12 million over six years. In July 2023, the board approved the 2023-25 spending plan that included a total of \$11 million for new FIP initiatives starting in the current biennium.

### II. Solicitation and Expert Review Process

In May 2023, staff announced the solicitation for FIP initiatives to begin in the 2023-2025 biennium. Interested partnerships were required to formally consult with OWEB staff prior to the October 16, 2023, FIP application deadline. OWEB staff met with six partnerships interested in applying for a FIP, and five partnerships ultimately submitted applications:

- Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative
- Hood River Basin Partnership
- Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership
- Nehalem Basin Partnership
- Oregon All Counties CCAA Steering Committee

Applications were reviewed according to the FIP evaluation criteria (**Attachment A**). In response to reviewer and applicant feedback after the 2021 FIP awards, a single expert review team meeting was held in-person with a virtual option on January 9, 2024. The reviewers included individuals with expertise in each of the board-identified ecological priorities that were included in the applications as well as specialists in partnership capacity.

Reviewers discussed strengths and concerns, according to the evaluation criteria, and provided a ranking (1-5) for each application. Evaluations for each application reflect the ranking and detailed strengths and concerns identified by reviewers (**Attachment B**).

With \$11 million in the board's spending plan for new FIP initiatives in 2023-2025, the top four applications could be funded. **Attachment C** displays the proportion of the board's spending plan currently dedicated to FIPs and forecasts the next three biennia, assuming the board awards the top four applications in the current grant cycle and a similar level of future investment in new FIPs.

### III. Grants Committee Interviews and Recommendations

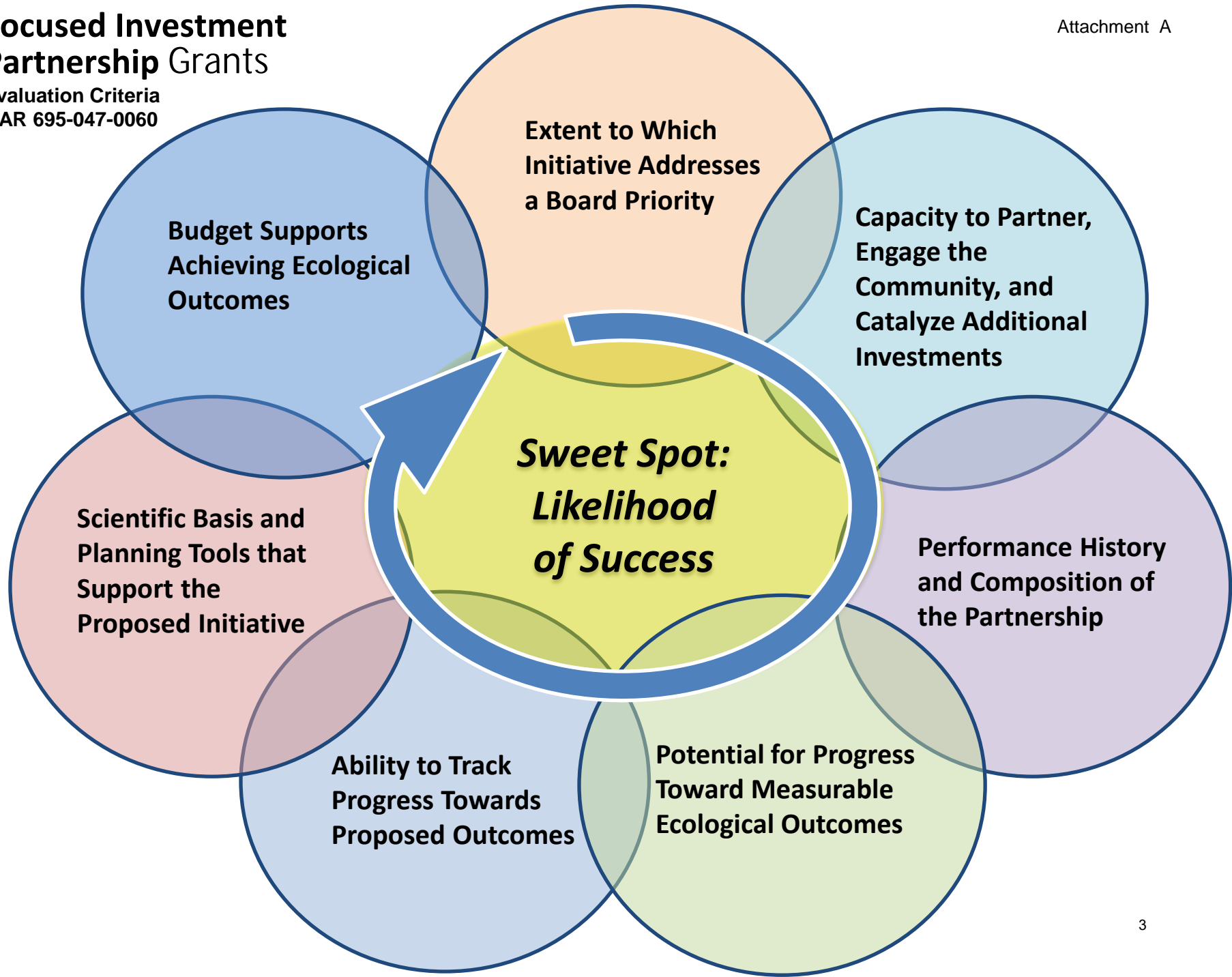
On March 12, 2024, the OWEB Board Grants Committee will meet to interview the FIP applicant partnerships. Following the applicant interviews, the committee will deliberate and consider the results of the expert review process and the interviews. The committee will then make a funding recommendation for new FIP partnerships for the full board to consider at their April 22-24, 2024, meeting in Baker City.

### IV. Attachments

- A. FIP Evaluation Criteria
- B. 2023-2025 Application Evaluations
- C. Future FIP Spending Bar Graph

# Focused Investment Partnership Grants

Evaluation Criteria  
OAR 695-047-0060



## 2023-2025 FIP Proposals Overview for OWEB Grants Committee

Partnership	Initiative	FIP Ecological Priority	B1 Request	B2 Request	B3 Request	Total Request	Review Team Ranking
Hood River Basin Partnership	Hood River Basin Aquatic Habitat Restoration Initiative	Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish	\$2,933,414	\$3,503,414	\$3,703,414	\$10,140,242	1
Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership	Lake County All Lands Restoration Initiative	Dry-Type Forest Habitat	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$12,000,000	2
Oregon All Counties CCAA Steering Committee	Oregon Sage-grouse Habitat Initiative	Sagebrush/Sage-steppe Habitat	\$2,004,839	\$4,000,000	\$3,938,835	\$9,943,674	3
Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative	Integrated Wetlands Management in Harney Closed Lakes Basin	Oregon Closed Lakes Basin Wetlands Habitats	\$510,610	\$3,927,400	\$3,785,400	\$8,223,410	4
Nehalem Basin Partnership	Nehalem Coho Habitat Initiative	Coho Habitat Populations along the Oregon Coast	\$3,914,117	\$3,708,767	\$3,043,167	\$10,666,051	5
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,362,980</b>	<b>\$19,139,581</b>	<b>\$18,470,816</b>	<b>\$50,973,377</b>	

# 2023-2025 Grant Offering

## *Focused Investment Partnership Program*

**Name of Initiative:** Hood River Basin Aquatic Habitat Restoration Initiative

**Name of Partnership:** Hood River Basin Partnership

**Name of Applicant:** Hood River Watershed Group

**Initiative addresses the following Board-identified Priority(ies):** Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species

**Application Number:** 224-8226-23377

**Region:** 4 – Central Oregon

**County(ies):** Hood River

### **Budget Overview:**

<b>Funding Period</b>	<b>OWEB Funding Request</b>	<b>Estimated Match</b>
Biennium 1	\$2,933,414	\$16,072,000
Biennium 2	\$3,503,414	\$4,821,370
Biennium 3	\$3,703,414	\$7,096,370
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,140,242</b>	<b>\$27,989,740</b>

---

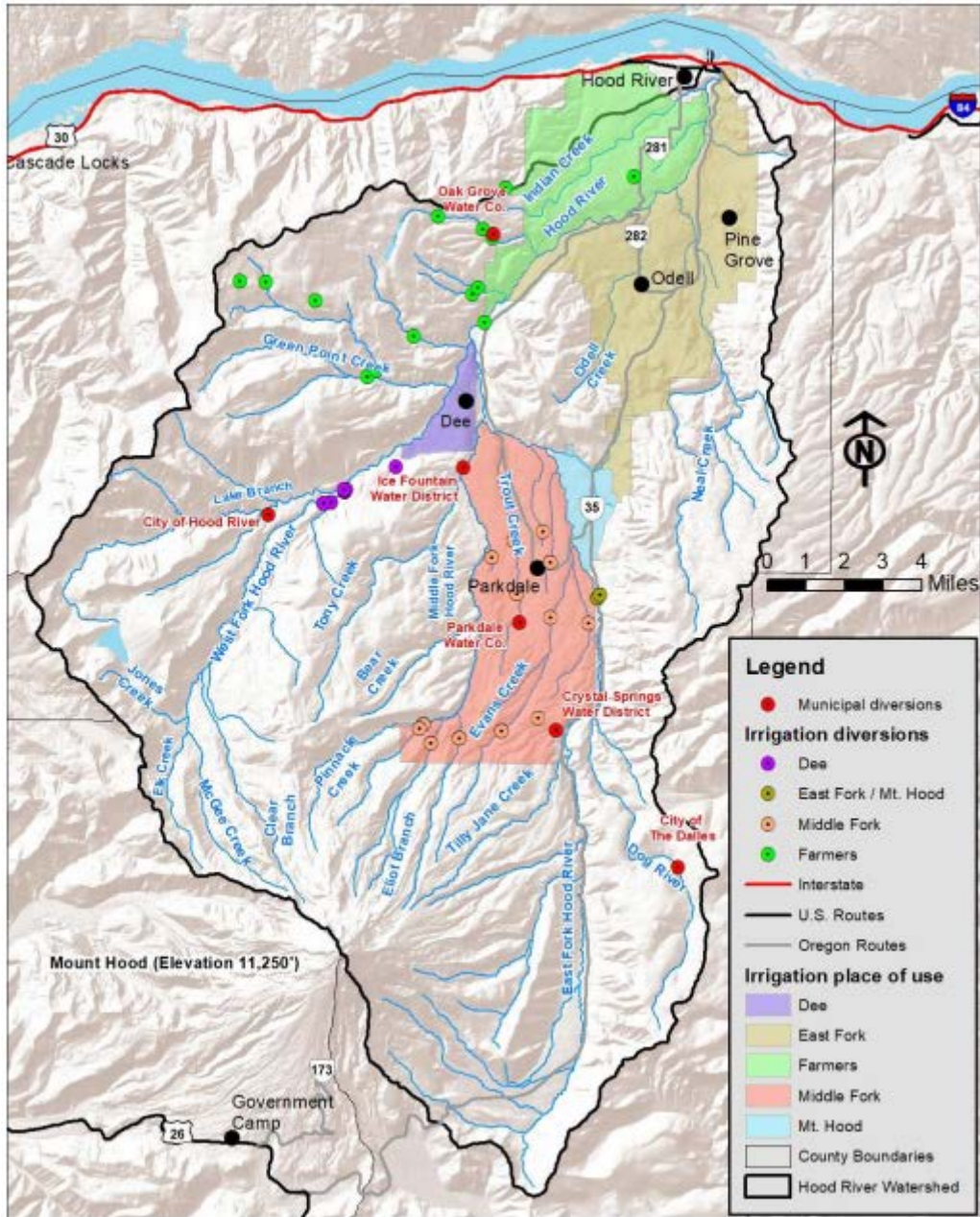
### **APPLICATION DESCRIPTION [PROVIDED BY THE APPLICANT]**

The Hood River Basin Partnership has eight core partners participating in this proposal, including the Hood River Watershed Group (HRWG), Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs (CTWS), East Fork Irrigation District (EFID), Farmers Irrigation District (FID), Middle Fork Irrigation District (MFID), USFS Hood River Ranger District (USFS), and the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW). Key ecological outcomes include 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. FIP funding would 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. The scope of work is consistent with OWEB's 'Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species' FIP priority for several reasons: 1) the Hood River Watershed is a high priority focal area; 2) the projects/actions in this proposal address limiting factors identified in the Lower Columbia Conservation and Recovery Plan for Oregon Populations of Salmon and Steelhead (2010); and 3) collectively, the proposed actions will restore and protect watershed processes that lead to improved aquatic habitat for Chinook salmon, steelhead, coho salmon, bull trout, Pacific lamprey, and other native fish species.

**Attachment A:** Initiative Map

**Attachment B:** Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet

Attachment A: Initiative Map



## Attachment B: Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet

---

### REVIEW

The review below is the staff prepared evaluation of the application based on the evaluation criteria outlined in OAR 695-047-0060 incorporating feedback from the Expert Review Team.

**Expert Review Team Ranking:** 1 of 5

### EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### **(a) The extent to which the initiative addresses a Board-identified priority.**

##### **Strengths**

- The initiative proposes to increase salmon, steelhead, lamprey, and other native fish productivity through implementation of projects that increase instream and floodplain habitat diversity and complexity, increase instream habitat availability and quality, address impaired water quality and quantity, and by increasing support and actions by community members for aquatic habitat and conservation.
- The partnership utilized research, assessments, and climate modeling to inform the work that they are proposing and demonstrate a well-founded connection to the ODFW Lower Columbia River Conservation and Recovery Plan for Salmon and Steelhead.
- Due to the geographic location, within a primary cold-water refuge of the Columbia River, and the cold water it will maintain in the face of a changing climate, this watershed is a high state priority for salmon recovery.

##### **Concerns**

None.

#### **(b) The capacity to partner, engage the community, and catalyze additional investments applied to activities within the initiative geography.**

##### **Strengths**

- The description of engagement activities clearly outlines the strategies, proposed activities, and partners to lead the activities. There is a breadth of partners involved in local engagement across the basin.
- The Partnership has workshops and trainings planned for implementation based on lessons learned and participant assessments from past sessions that have helped identify and frame these additional training needs.
- The application provides a description of significant engagement activities implemented to date, in particular, engagement with local irrigation districts to implement water efficiency projects.
- The Partnership has identified strategies for engaging with the basin's Spanish-speaking population, including a plan for on-boarding a bilingual irrigation specialist.
- The robust proposed engagement activities represent the diversity and needs of the watershed community and support projects that will occur on both public and privately owned working lands.



- The partnership has secured additional investment from federal and state sources and demonstrates the investments have a high likelihood of being secured for the duration of the FIP.

### **Concerns**

- The Partnership's needs assessment identified that flow restoration is a high priority. The partners have worked on this type of project for many years, but the application does not describe whether there is landowner demand for more irrigation efficiency projects, or how these projects will result in additional streamflow.
- Mt Hood National Forest comprises half the watershed acreage and the USFS level of financial commitment is minimal in comparison with their ownership, indicating a missed opportunity for leveraging restoration funds.

### **(c) The performance history and composition of the partnership.**

#### **Strengths**

- The application demonstrates meaningful connection with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs as a key, core partner integrated in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of proposed projects.
- This is a long-standing partnership with 35 years combined history of successful collaboration and project implementation that has effectively implemented restoration projects and adaptively managed their work through 4 editions of Strategic Action Plans.
- The application describes each partner contributing their strengths and bringing those strengths to the collaborative work of the Partnership. The Partnership's composition demonstrates that the right partners are involved to achieve the proposed ecological outcomes.
- The partners have extensive experience with engaging private landowners and the application includes a description of those successful efforts.
- The Partnership has shared governance and a strategy for training and on-boarding new partners when transitions in membership or leadership occur.

#### **Concerns**

- The Farmers Conservation Alliance does not have a clear role in the Partnership, though they are mentioned in the SAP. Given their interest in irrigation modernization and efficiency and their headquarters in the basin, FCA would be a valuable partner for the initiative.
- The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will be supplying significant funding to support projects in the Initiative, but their role as a partner is not described in the application.

### **(d) The extent to which the proposed approach will make progress toward measurable ecological outcomes.**

#### **Strengths**

- The application describes a suite of specific projects that are ready for implementation in the first biennium and a workable scale of projects is included for biennia 2 and 3.
- The proposed actions and ecological outcomes clearly identify specific targets to address the identified limiting factors that includes physical and biological as well as social and cultural outcomes.

### **Concerns**

- In Table 4, the Initiative's restoration target for riparian habitat restoration is only one mile. This seems like a low target for a 6-year initiative.
- The application only includes one reference to livestock exclusion fencing and it is not clear whether this activity is proposed for implementation in the FIP.

### **(e) The ability to track progress towards proposed outcomes.**

#### **Strengths**

- The application includes an initiative target for each restoration strategy that includes project specific information and a description of the anticipated longer-term outcomes, indicating high likelihood that targets are achievable.
- The work plan includes effective metrics and outputs and relates these to the desired ecological outcomes for each proposed project.
- The partnership has relevant monitoring experience and identifies significant support, including from CTWS, ODFW and USFS for continuing those efforts.
- The application clearly describes a manageable quality assurance control plan as well as a data management plan that aligns with partners through the pesticide stewardship partnership.

#### **Concerns**

- Fisheries monitoring is important and challenging and the place to do it is in these lower Columbia River populations; however, fish response may not be an appropriate metric because the timescale to see fish response is beyond the 6-year timeline of the FIP.
- The application describes a strategy to protect summer flows instream. It is not clear how much of that water can be legally protected instream. In the workplan, it appears that piping open canals could legally protect at least 10 cfs of the 18.6 cfs of instream flow that could be legally protected.

### **(f) The scientific basis and planning tools that support the proposed Initiative.**

#### **Strengths**

- The proposal provides good detail on how activities are prioritized using intrinsic potential for fish habitat, Bonneville Power Administration's Atlas model, ODFW's Recovery Plan, along with integration of hydrologic conditions.
- The partners are working from a fourth iteration of their SAP, which demonstrates commitment to process, as well as the partnership's successful implementation of projects that then necessitates updating the SAP as restoration targets are met.
- The included river network and steelhead intrinsic potential maps illustrate the Initiative's focus on high and medium potential habitat and that is carried through in the narrative describing the partnership's prioritization approach.
- The initiative focuses efforts on high and medium intrinsic potential areas within the Hood River watershed, as well as the various target audiences within those areas, such as agricultural operators and pesticide applicators.

#### **Concerns**

None.

**(g) The extent to which the allocation of funds across proposed grant types will support the achievement of the proposed ecological outcomes.**

**Strengths**

- The proposed budget dedicates over 60% of the requested funding to on the ground restoration projects to be implemented by multiple partners, demonstrating commitment across the partnership to sharing the work of implementing the FIP.
- The budget shows diverse, secured and pending match that aligns with activities proposed in the FIP.
- The application describes significant leverage with over \$27 million of secured and pending funding anticipated over the timeframe of the FIP.
- The application clearly describes how funding and project workload will be shared between the partners.

**Concerns**

- A small percentage of funding, less than 1% of the OWEB budget, is allocated for Partnership Technical Assistance and this may not be sufficient to cover the costs associated with partnership leadership including facilitation, coordination, and reporting.
- The application is not clear on whether the secured and pending funding would be awarded regardless of the FIP award, so these OWEB funds are co-funding, not really leveraged funding.

# 2023-2025 Grant Offering

## *Focused Investment Partnership Program*

**Name of Initiative:** Lake County All Lands Restoration Initiative

**Name of Partnership:** Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership

**Name of Applicant:** Lake County Umbrella Watershed Council

**Initiative addresses the following Board-identified Priority(ies):** Dry-Type Forest Habitat

**Application Number:** 224-8218

**Region:** 4 – Central Oregon

**County(ies):** Lake County

### **Budget Overview:**

<b>Funding Period</b>	<b>OWEB Funding Request</b>	<b>Estimated Match</b>
Biennium 1	\$4,000,000	\$4,191,000
Biennium 2	\$4,000,000	\$4,182,500
Biennium 3	\$4,000,000	\$3,982,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,000,000</b>	<b>\$12,356,000</b>

---

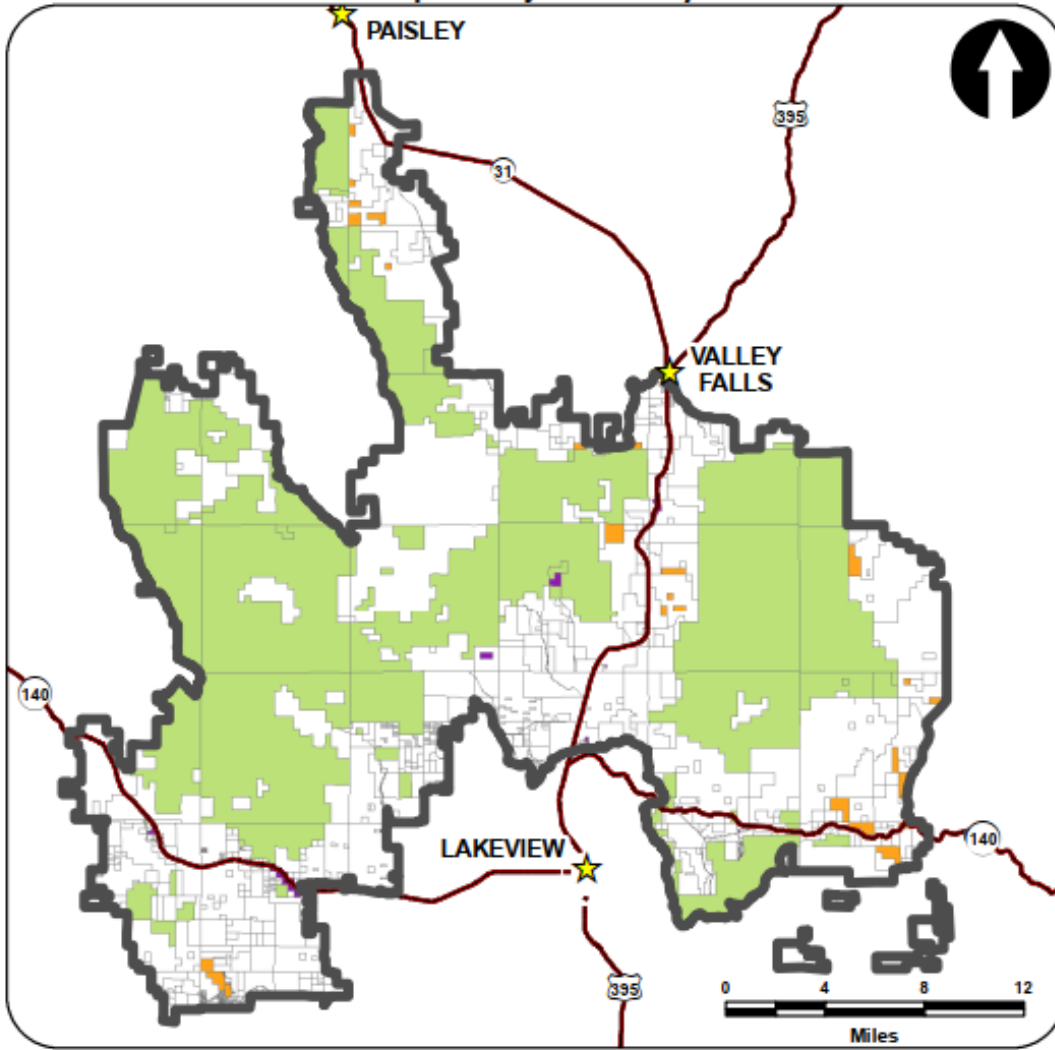
### **APPLICATION DESCRIPTION [PROVIDED BY THE APPLICANT]**


The partnership envisions utilizing this funding to create a healthy, resilient, and functional forest landscape maintained with fire as an ecological process, while mitigating the threat of high severity wildfire to dry forests, fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, and the surrounding human communities. The ecological outcomes align with the Dry-Type Forest Habitat OWEB priority and include: developing a short- and long-term strategy for prescribed fire to re-establish the historical frequency of fire; engaging with private landowners to increase public knowledge of dry forest restoration principles and techniques; restoring dry forest landscape resiliency by re-establishing open and variable forest structure and reducing fuel loading; restoring healthy aspen, meadow, and shrub-steppe habitats by reducing encroaching conifers and juniper; and re-introducing prescribed fire as a key ecological process. These outcomes would be accomplished through strategic thinning, prescribed fire, and noxious weed treatments completed by the core partners including Klamath-Lake Forest Health Partnership (KLFHP), Lake County Umbrella Watershed Council (LCUWC), Fremont-Winema National Forest (USFS), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Oregon State University (OSU Extension), Lake County Resources Initiative (LCRI), Lake County Cooperative Weed Management Area (Lake County CWMA), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the University of Oregon (UO).

**Attachment A:** Initiative Map

**Attachment B:** Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet

**Lake County All Lands Restoration Initiative  
Map 1: Project Vicinity**



 **Lake County All Lands Restoration Initiative Boundary (LCALRI)**

## Attachment B: Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet

---

### REVIEW

The review below is the staff prepared evaluation of the application based on the evaluation criteria outlined in OAR 695-047-0060 incorporating feedback from the Expert Review Team.

**Expert Review Team Ranking: 2 of 5**

### EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### **(a) The extent to which the initiative addresses a Board-identified priority.**

##### **Strengths**

- The proposed work is a significant contribution to wildfire risk reduction in high priority, ecologically sensitive areas. The geographic boundary was developed at the local level by core partners in the Klamath-Lake Forest Health Partnership.
- The proposal describes several anticipated ecological outcomes, including: a strategy for prescribed fire to re-establish historical frequency; engaging private landowners to increase knowledge about dry forest restoration; re-establishing open and variable forest structure and reducing fuel load; restoring aspen, meadow, and shrub-steppe habitats.
- The application describes how the proposed work will build on past successes with dry-type forest restoration into a new geography, engaging local communities to apply vegetation treatments, forest thinning, and prescribed fire. The proposed work will use a similar mapping and inventory approach in the new geography, an area over 400,000 acres.
- The benefits to Oregon Conservation Strategy (OCS) habitats and species are integrated into the proposed workplan. Workplan objectives included “develop, maintain and/or improve structure of Oregon Conservation Strategy forest-dependent species,” and a table listing Strategy Species is included in the Strategic Action Plan. The project area encompasses two Strategy Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs): Warner Mountain and Thomas Creek-Goose Lake. The Strategic Action Plan includes description of how the project will address conservation actions recommended for these COAs.

##### **Concerns**

None.

#### **(b) The capacity to partner, engage the community, and catalyze additional investments applied to activities within the initiative geography.**

##### **Strengths**

- The partnership has demonstrated success in catalyzing investments from different state and federal funding sources.
- The partnership has demonstrated substantial success engaging landowners in restoration. One example is through a prescribed fire workshop for private landowners.
- Partners indicate support and willingness to lead outreach and engagement efforts.

### **Concerns**

- The proposed strategies to engage with communities are not clearly described. The number of landowners and specific locations are not included in the application.
- The core partners are primarily agencies, but private landowners are key to accomplishing this restoration work. The application lacked a description of the extent to which individual private landowners engage with the core partner organizations. The number of landowners and specific locations are not included in the application.
- The lessons learned from past private land mapping and assessment work, and how they can be applied to future efforts, are not described.

### **(c) The performance history and composition of the partnership.**

#### **Strengths**

- The Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership has demonstrated success implementing fire risk reduction at scale across land ownerships. The partnership history dates back to 1995 and has demonstrated recent momentum with the development of a strategic action plan in 2020, and a monitoring plan in 2021.
- The partnership has demonstrated true coordination among partner organizations, with multiple agreements between and among partners. The Partnership's foundational documents provide a strategic, sequenced approach outlining their rationale and history.
- The partnership engages with universities and uses a process to identify priority monitoring questions, demonstrating an applied science approach and a willingness to learn.

#### **Concerns**

- Tribal engagement described in the application is limited and the activities described in the application fall short of meaningful relationship building. While the application references the Klamath Tribes Forest Management guide, the proposed activities are one-way communications with the Klamath Tribes and Paiute Tribes.
- Coordination of the partnership relies on the capacity of the Lake County Umbrella Watershed Council. If staff turnover were to occur at the watershed council, it may result in a significant loss of momentum for the partnership.

### **(d) The extent to which the proposed approach will make progress toward measurable ecological outcomes.**

#### **Strengths**

- The partnership has a proven track record of forest thinning and monitoring. The proposed activities will implement this restoration action at scale, in an ecologically high-risk area, with many small communities. The application describes the potential benefits for species and habitats.
- The proposed initiative is a simple, focused and strategic approach, that includes thinning, noxious weed removal, and prescribed fire. The proposed project activities have been prioritized clearly, with targeted thinning on moderate and high priority stands that complements work already completed on federal land.



- Pile burning is part of the project activities when and where it is safe, and the landowners feel confident to do so. The Strategic Action Plan describes that professional forestry experts will assist with recommendations on prescribed burning where needed.
- The proposal describes a successful workshop for private landowners focused on prescribed fire.

### **Concerns**

- The application describes the goal of preparing the landscape for prescribed fire, but funding for proposed restoration actions is for thinning. The application does not provide specific steps for how the partnership will be able to deploy prescribed fire.
- The application does not describe anticipated barriers to implementing prescribed fire on private lands. Some discussion about anticipated barriers, and potential solutions such as seasonal windows, would help support these objectives.
- If prescribed fire is an anticipated action, a larger suite of tribal, federal and research partners may need to be engaged.
- Although recent large fires in the area are described (e.g., Bootleg Fire and Cougar Peak Fire), it is not clear from the application how these landscapes are being approached under the current proposal. It is not clear if restoration and recovery from these large-scale fires was covered through different funding sources.
- The proposed activities will generate substantial biomass material, but the application does not describe what will happen with this material. It is unclear what will happen during the timeframe between thinning and implementing prescribed fire. The application does not address the steps involved with material creation and/or disposal. The application does not acknowledge potential climate considerations with pile burning.
- The unique and sensitive Whitebark pine tree species is described along with the high-elevation habitats in the application, but specific management actions to take when this species is encountered are not described.

### **(e) The ability to track progress towards proposed outcomes.**

#### **Strengths**

- The approach to identifying and initiating projects is data-driven and strategic.
- A monitoring plan (2021) is in place to guide how to collect, track and share data generated throughout the FIP initiative. The monitoring plan is informed by a thoughtful process to define priority monitoring questions and then apply criteria to determine whether questions are included in the final monitoring plan. Criteria include scientific support and applicability. The application describes that the monitoring plan will be updated annually based on new information or questions identified.
- Data management and analysis are described, for each of the different types of data generated (aquatics, canopy, vegetation, soils). The goal is to analyze data on present conditions and create a GIS database to provide the data online and available to the public.

#### **Concerns**

- While the monitoring plan is detailed, it is unclear if all the data collected will be reported along with the information on the metrics table provided in the application. Many of the metrics in the

table are implementation metrics and it is not clear how they connect with indicators of restoration effectiveness.

- A stated goal is to re-establish the historical range in the frequency of fire. However, there are limitations to using historical range of variability to set restoration goals. Climate change, shifts in native and invasive species distribution, and land development will affect the capability to achieve a restoration goal based on historic conditions.

**(f) The scientific basis and planning tools that support the proposed Initiative.**

**Strengths**

- The proposed work is organized by implementation zones: Conifer, Aspen/Meadow, and Shrub-steppe. Conditions are described unique to each of these ecological zones.
- The work plan is informed by well-established fire zone maps and includes Oregon Conservation Strategy Conservation Opportunity Areas and U.S. Forest Service Watershed Condition Framework rankings. The application distinguishes between implementation on public and privately owned land. The application describes using the FIREMON (Fire Effects Monitoring and Inventory Protocol) protocol to look at change in ecological attributes over time. FIREMON is an agency independent plot sampling system.
- Workplan goals and objectives are defined and well sequenced through the timeframe of the initiative (2025 through 2030).
- The application proposes work with the University of Oregon Ecosystem Workforce Program to gather information about social science metrics.

**Concerns**

None.

**(g) The extent to which the allocation of funds across proposed grant types will support the achievement of the proposed ecological outcomes.**

**Strengths**

- The detailed budget identifies how the full suite of different grant types will be used each biennium to achieve the project objectives. This budget includes different match sources for each of the grant types and specifies how the OWEB funds will be distributed.
- The application includes a detailed budget with lead partners and funding sources, including Monitoring, Data Analysis and Reporting phased through each biennium.

**Concerns**

None.

# 2023-2025 Grant Offering

## *Focused Investment Partnership Program*

**Name of Initiative:** Oregon Sage-grouse Habitat Initiative

**Name of Partnership:** Oregon All Counties CCAA Steering Committee

**Name of Applicant:** Crook County Soil and Water Conservation District

**Initiative addresses the following Board-identified Priority(ies):** Sagebrush/Sage-steppe Habitat

**Application Number:** 224-8224-23379

**Region:** 4-Central OR and 5-Eastern OR

**County(ies):** Crook, Deschutes, Harney, Lake, Malheur

### **Budget Overview:**

<b>Funding Period</b>	<b>OWEB Funding Request</b>	<b>Estimated Match</b>
Biennium 1	\$2,004,839	\$6,485,796
Biennium 2	\$4,000,000	\$4,067,196
Biennium 3	\$3,938,835	\$3,127,600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,943,674</b>	<b>\$13,680,592</b>

---

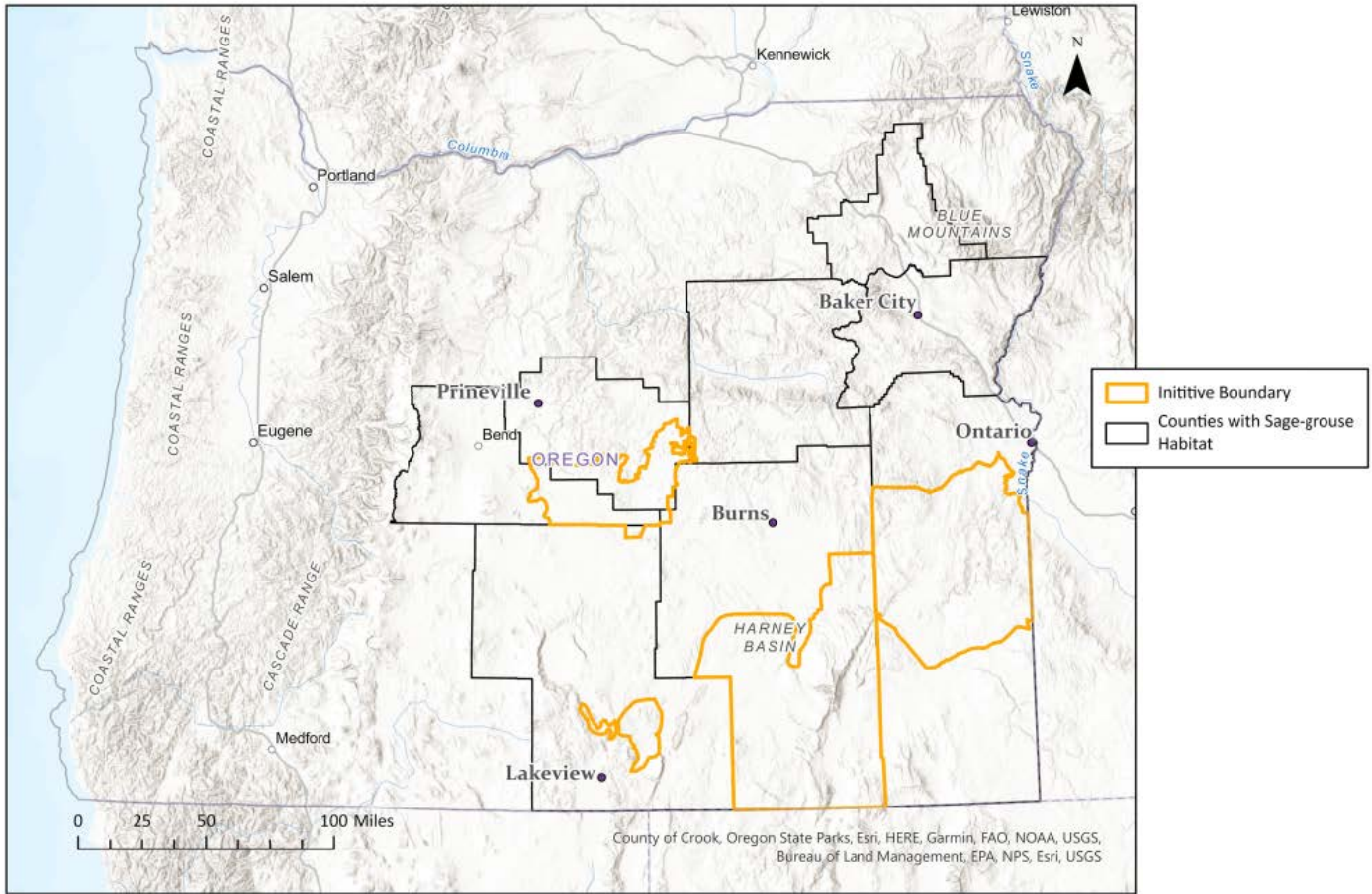
### **APPLICATION DESCRIPTION [PROVIDED BY THE APPLICANT]**

Engaging private landowners is a crucial component in achieving landscape-scale habitat conservation, and approximately 2.2 million acres of sagebrush-steppe habitat in Oregon are privately owned. The Oregon Sage-Grouse Habitat Initiative includes the following Core Partners: Crook County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Harney SWCD, Lakeview SWCD, Malheur County SWCD, and US Fish and Wildlife Service (Partnership). Rooted in resilient ranching practices, the Partnership’s primary ecological outcomes are generated by implementing the work that is prescribed in CCAA conservation plans. The outcomes we will measure include reducing wildfire risk, reducing juniper cover, reducing and preventing annual grass invasions, and managing grazing practices to benefit sage-grouse. Enrolling lands under voluntary conservation agreements, guiding conservation action development, and actuating conservation measures requires a robust administrative framework and staff capacity. The Partnership seeks additional funding to achieve the goals outlined in the Strategic Action Plan. Over the three-biennia funding period, the Partnership will continue to write, implement, and monitor the long-term plans that are agreed to by the landowner, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the SWCDs. The Partnership will implement measures defined in their Programmatic agreements to achieve these ecological outcomes. The Partnership’s efforts and work are located within high-priority habitat areas and connect sage-grouse “strongholds” within the planning area and can have benefits that continue well beyond fence boundaries. These actions directly align with Board priorities to improve and restore sagebrush-steppe ecosystem function and greater sage-grouse habitat.

**Attachment A:** Initiative Map

**Attachment B:** Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet

# Attachment A: Initiative Map



## Attachment B: Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet

---

### REVIEW

The review below is the staff prepared evaluation of the application based on the evaluation criteria outlined in OAR 695-047-0060 incorporating feedback from the Expert Review Team.

**Expert Review Team Ranking: 3 of 5**

### EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### **(a) The extent to which the initiative addresses a Board-identified priority.**

##### **Strengths**

- The partnership is addressing the ecological threats in priority sage-grouse habitats as identified in the OWEB Board Sagebrush/Sage-steppe habitat priority for the Focused Investment Partnership program. In particular, the partnership is working to connect 'strongholds' of sage-grouse habitat while also providing benefits to other sagebrush-obligate species.
- The partnership has keen insights and experience working with the ranching community implementing actions that improve the ecological condition of rangelands in a manner that also provides social and economic benefits.
- The 30-year agreements through the Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA) between landowners and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provide certainty that conservation measures will be implemented, monitored, and adaptively managed over time.

##### **Concerns**

- The application lacks detail on the impact of previous conservation actions on the trajectory of sagebrush/sage-steppe habitat in Oregon.

#### **(b) The capacity to partner, engage the community, and catalyze additional investments applied to activities within the initiative geography.**

##### **Strengths**

- The partners are well-integrated in their communities, energized in their conservation work, and have built trust with landowners.
- The partnership has a history of success in securing funding to implement sage-grouse conservation efforts, including a recent investment by the Oregon Legislature for controlling juniper expansion in sage-grouse habitat.
- The partners have cultivated relationships with a number of landowners that have committed to implementing sage-grouse conservation efforts and are simply waiting for implementation funding.

##### **Concerns**

- The partnership's approach toward tribal engagement is lacking.
- The engagement strategy described in the application appears to be one-directional and may lack opportunities for meaningful community input.

**(c) The performance history and composition of the partnership.**

**Strengths**

- The partnership developed a ranking system to vet individual projects and ensure that priority projects are moved forward for funding and implementation.
- The Oregon All Counties CCAA Steering Committee is a long-standing, resilient partnership with several experienced members that are available to mentor as new members join.
- The partnership composition supports the conservation work proposed.

**Concerns**

- The application lacks detail on how the Rangeland Fire Protection Associations are engaged in this proposed initiative.
- The heavy landowner demand to enroll in the CCAA program puts a lot of pressure on the partnership to develop site specific plans for landowners and implement conservation action in a timely manner. Loss of any capacity in the partnership may result in the inability to implement the work.

**(d) The extent to which the proposed approach will make progress toward measurable ecological outcomes.**

**Strengths**

- The partnership met or exceeded most of their objectives in their previous FIP initiative that was completed in the 2021-2023 biennium.
- The partnership utilizes a well-vetted 'threat-based approach' with landowners to address conservation measures and implement adaptive management through formal site-specific plans tailored to individual properties that are in place for 30 years.

**Concerns**

- The application does not describe how lessons learned have been incorporated into their approach. For example, how has the partnership's vast prior experience in treating annual invasive grasses informed current management?

**(e) The ability to track progress towards proposed outcomes.**

**Strengths**

- The partnership has established baseline conditions and permanent locations where monitoring will occur prior to implementing conservation work.
- The partnership has a clear system for data management and analysis that has been well-incorporated into the partners' workflow for several years and features a process that efficiently develops annual monitoring reports.
- The partnership has worked extensively with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other partners like the Institute for Natural Resources to develop outcome indicators and metrics. Regular reporting to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will help ensure that ecological objectives are being met.

### **Concerns**

- The application lacks detail on precisely how habitat conditions are evaluated and what would constitute sufficient ecological uplift to know if the conservation measures are being effective.

### **(f) The scientific basis and planning tools that support the proposed Initiative.**

#### **Strengths**

- The partnership is implementing the CCAA program for sage-grouse in Oregon, which are 30-year agreements between the partners and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The agreements provide regulatory certainty to landowners while promoting rangeland health and habitat conservation for sage-grouse. The duration of the agreements helps the partners conduct adaptive management, as conservation efforts in this habitat type can take years before success is determined.
- The application incorporates both the current and future expected impacts of climate change in sagebrush/sage-steppe habitat, including increasing high-severity fire and altered weather patterns.
- The application notes the adaptation strategies to climate change including conservation action that helps to reduce the negative effects of wildfire, improving ecosystem resilience through control of invasive annual grasses, and enhancing mesic habits to improve water availability.
- The conservation actions described in the application are consistent with priorities identified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

### **Concerns**

- The application is sparse in details regarding how the partnership intends to implement mesic habitat restoration that provides important brood-rearing benefits for sage-grouse in this initiative.

### **(g) The extent to which the allocation of funds across proposed grant types will support the achievement of the proposed ecological outcomes.**

#### **Strengths**

- The proposed budget and initiative work plan are well integrated and include funding targets necessary to address various conservation threats.
- The partnership has been strategic in using OWEB funding to fill in gaps where federal funding may be limited or unavailable.

### **Concerns**

- The partnership has allocated a relatively low amount of funding towards partnership technical assistance, but given the nature of the partnership, additional resources may not be required.



# 2023-2025 OWEB Grant Offering

## *Focused Investment Partnership Program*

**Name of Initiative:** Integrated Wetlands Management in Harney Closed Lakes Basin

**Name of Partnership:** Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative

**Name of Applicant:** High Desert Partnership

**Initiative addresses the following Board-identified Priority(ies):** Oregon Closed Lakes Basin Wetland Habitats

**Application Number:** 224-8219-23376

**Region:** 5-Eastern OR

**County(ies):** Harney

### **Budget Overview:**

<b>Funding Period</b>	<b>OWEB Funding Request</b>	<b>Estimated Match</b>
Biennium 1	\$510,610	\$1,635,386
Biennium 2	\$3,927,400	\$1,635,387
Biennium 3	\$3,785,400	\$1,635,387
TOTAL	\$8,223,410	\$4,906,160

---

### **APPLICATION DESCRIPTION [PROVIDED BY THE APPLICANT]**

The wetlands of Harney Basin represent critically important migratory and breeding habitat for birds on the Pacific Flyway. These wetlands face significant threats from invasive carp, invasive vegetation, and legacy infrastructure. These threats are further exacerbated by the increasing impacts of climate change. Until 2007, long-standing conflicts and deep-seated distrust limited progress in addressing these issues. However, the creation of the High Desert Partnership in 2007 has ushered in a new era of collaboration to pursue solutions that both improve the ecology of the landscape and support the local economy.

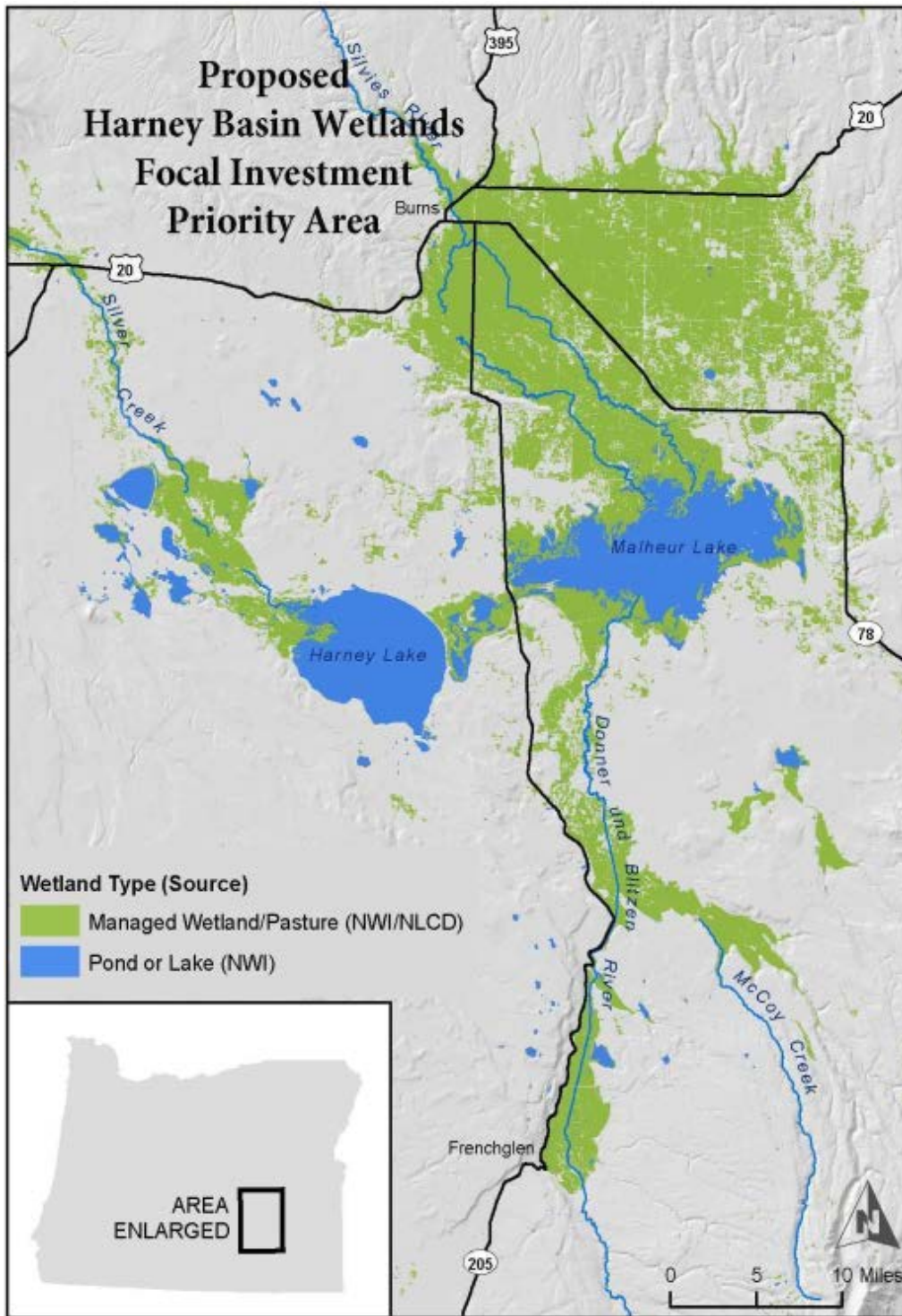
Core partners (Malheur NWR, Ducks Unlimited, NRCS, USGS, Portland Audubon, Wet Meadow Partners, Harney SWCD, County Court, Friends of Malheur NWR, Intermountain West Joint Venture, Harney County Watershed Council, Eastern Oregon Ag Research Center, Bird Conservation Oregon, Burns-Paiute Tribe and landowners) propose to build upon more than 15 years of effort to restore and manage wetlands across the hydrologically connected landscape of Silver Creek floodplain, the floodplains of northeastern tributaries, the Silvies River Floodplain, the Blitzen River Floodplain and the wetlands of Malheur Lake.

Priority projects will include 1) carp reduction, 2) management tools to control invasive plant species, 3) replacement of aging infrastructure, 4) floodplain reconnection and riparian restoration and 5) aquatic habitat management for wetland restoration.

Measurable outcomes will be relative carp population size, emergent vegetation area in Malheur Lake wetlands, relative abundance of breeding birds, shorebirds and migratory waterbirds, and acres of flood-irrigated wet meadows managed to optimize available water use for forage and habitat value.

**Attachment A:** Initiative Map

**Attachment B:** Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet



Extent of wetlands in the Harney Basin, Oregon. Produced in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Division of Realty and Refuge Information, Portland, OR. 9/17/2014. File 14-131-2.MXD.

## Attachment B: Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet

---

### REVIEW

The review below is the staff prepared evaluation of the application based on the evaluation criteria outlined in OAR 695-047-0060 incorporating feedback from the Expert Review Team.

**Expert Review Team Ranking: 4 of 5**

### EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### **(a) The extent to which the initiative addresses a Board-identified priority.**

##### **Strengths**

- Harney basin and its wetlands are critical components to SONEC regional flyways. Approximately 70% of migratory birds pass through this area annually. The initiative proposes to achieve ecological outcomes supporting migratory bird habitat through an integrated landscape approach.
- The initiative proposes to continue addressing carp and vegetation in Malheur Lake, which is necessary to mitigate/create resiliency in the system.
- The goals of the initiative are to achieve a sustainable wetland system in Harney Basin with a maximum footprint of flood irrigated wet meadows, healthy marsh conditions, and increased emergent vegetation in Malheur Lake. These goals clearly support the ecological outcomes of the initiative.

##### **Concerns**

- The application lacks description and analysis of the historic trajectory of this closed system and whether the initiative can offset future systemic changes caused by long-term precipitation patterns. Malheur Lake was significantly altered by ice and flooding in the 1980's, which caused the lake to lose its submerged and emergent vegetation and also allowed carp access to the lake. This all transformed the lake into a turbid, shallow water body with reduced bird use. It is unclear whether ecological benefits achieved by the initiative are sustainable over the long-term given the likelihood of future systemic changes.

#### **(b) The capacity to partner, engage the community, and catalyze additional investments applied to activities within the initiative geography.**

##### **Strengths**

- The application is built on robust community engagement led by a diversity of partners.
- Partnership members have been highly successful in securing funds through recent OWEB Open Solicitation offerings.
- The application shows extensive leveraging of additional investments, including a recent \$2.5 million appropriation from the legislature. Significant contributions are coming from federal agencies and initiative partners as well.

### **Concerns**

- Partnership engagement with the landowner community to facilitate and support restoration is not well described in the application. The overly general description of engagement lacks details describing how engagement will be done. The application also did not describe how prior engagement led to successful restoration to date.
- It is unclear whether there are unreached landowners from the previous FIP initiative, and if this proposal seeks to fund projects in partnership with these landowners.

### **(c) The performance history and composition of the partnership.**

#### **Strengths**

- The partnership has demonstrated resilience in working through challenging and complex issues over a long period of time.
- The partnership has diverse membership, including among the core partners.
- The partnership has effective operating principles for engaging the community, particularly around issues where there is some conflict within the community.
- With previous funding the partnership replaced multiple strategic irrigation diversions on the Blitzen River, Silvies River, and Silver Creek; dams enhanced the ability to flood irrigate >5000 acres of wet meadows and fish passage was added to the upgraded dams. Through this work the partnership was also able to demonstrate the value of restoration to landowners.

#### **Concerns**

- While it is clear that the partnership has shown success over the years, the application lacked details describing how and why the partnership has been successful. For example, it is unclear if there are formal approaches for how the partnership deals with succession planning in terms of partner staff and board turnover and engaging new members of the partnership, or if this is accomplished more informally.
- It is sometimes unclear whether the High Desert Partnership or the Harney Basin Collaborative partnership will be responsible for specific actions.
- The Burns Paiute Tribe is listed as a core partner; however, their role in the initiative is unclear and they are not included on the signatory page.

### **(d) The extent to which the proposed approach will make progress toward measurable ecological outcomes.**

#### **Strengths**

- The partnership's monitoring data has shown that bird populations have increased in recent years. While this may be due in large part of precipitation patterns, restoration progress seems to be at least a contributing factor.
- The partnership has demonstrated adaptive management in their approach to issues associated with carp and restoring Malheur Lake and focusing on tributaries to provide important wet meadow habitat.

#### **Concerns**

- The metrics relative to bird populations are not described in the application making it unclear whether a scientific approach will be applied to this work.
- Vegetation management actions are not well described in the application, including strategies for managing invasives.
- It is unclear the extent to which information learned in the previous initiative informs the current initiative and whether the Strategic Action Plan needs to be updated to reflect lessons learned.

**(e) The ability to track progress towards proposed outcomes.**

**Strengths**

- Appropriate monitoring is described in the application and includes a phased approach aligned with the timing of implementation.

**Concerns**

- More recent information on carp would have been helpful to understand how progress toward carp management will be tracked.
- The initiative methods to track progress are not clearly described, including incorporation of scientific data on bird populations.

**(f) The scientific basis and planning tools that support the proposed Initiative.**

**Strengths**

- The partnership has done excellent work leading to a better of understanding carp dynamics and adaptively managing their approach to restoration.
- The partnership has adaptively managed their approach to restoring lake dynamics by developing a better understanding of sediment dynamics and the need to restore hydrologic function of the Donner und Blitzen River system to decrease sediment loading to the lake.
- The application clearly demonstrates the global significance of wetland habitat in the closed lakes basin and an understanding of how climate change affects bird populations.
- The partnership is using recent techniques that have shown promise with the genetic modification of carp in reducing populations of this invasive fish.
- The application demonstrates that the initiative and the prioritization of actions are based on, and integrating, principles of sound science and the use of effective planning tools.

**Concerns**

- It is unclear how the US Fish and Wildlife Service is engaged in the initiative and whether their priorities are incorporated into restoration strategies. The Malheur National Wildlife Refuge is a major landowner in the initiative geography.
- It is unclear how the priority areas determined from the wetland and ecohydrologic modeling efforts (resulting in the Watershed Synthesis Model) will be integrated with the other metrics, such as the bird surveys.

**(g) The extent to which the allocation of funds across proposed grant types will support the achievement of the proposed ecological outcomes.**

### **Strengths**

- The first biennium budget accurately reflects other secured funds that will help run the partnership and fund restoration actions. The biennia 2 and 3 budgets reflect an appropriate emphasis on restoration.

### **Concerns**

- While the High Desert Partnership is playing a coordination role in the initiative, the roles of this organization and the contracted facilitator are not clearly described.
- Continued landowner engagement is critical for continued restoration success, but the application did not clearly describe engagement plans with this community for the initiative.

# 2023-2025 Grant Offering

## *Focused Investment Partnership Program*

**Name of Initiative:** Nehalem Coho Habitat Initiative

**Name of Partnership:** Nehalem Basin Partnership

**Name of Applicant:** Upper Nehalem Watershed Council

**Initiative addresses the following Board-identified Priority(ies):** Coho Habitat Populations along the Oregon Coast

**Application Number:** 224-8227-23880

**Region:** 1 – North Coast

**County(ies):** Washington, Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook

### **Budget Overview:**

<b>Funding Period</b>	<b>OWEB Funding Request</b>	<b>Estimated Match</b>
Biennium 1	\$3,914,117	\$1,217,051
Biennium 2	\$3,708,767	\$1,022,801
Biennium 3	\$3,043,167	\$791,101
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$10,666,051</b>	<b>\$3,010,953</b>

---

### **APPLICATION DESCRIPTION [PROVIDED BY THE APPLICANT]**

Primary partners in the Nehalem Coho Habitat Initiative (NCHI) are the Upper and Lower Nehalem Watershed Councils, Lower Nehalem Community Trust, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Forestry and Weyerhaeuser as primary land managers in the basin and other private industrial forest owners. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is a critical technical partner as is NOAA Fisheries.

The NCHI focuses on addressing primary and secondary limiting factors for Oregon Coast (OC) Coho by increasing stream complexity and riparian cover in focal watersheds. The initiative will start to address large wood (stream complexity) of 16 sub-watersheds and riparian habitat targets for recovery. The lack of instream complexity and impaired water quality conditions are limiting recovery of the Nehalem OC Coho population and are expected to be exacerbated by climate change impacts.

Initiative funding will be used to increase the scale and scope of large wood placement, riparian and upslope restoration with a focus on prioritized anchor habitats for OC coho. A portion of the funding will be used to acquire conservation ownership for important coho habitat linked to the Nehalem Estuary to allow long-term protection and restoration of habitat for juvenile coho.

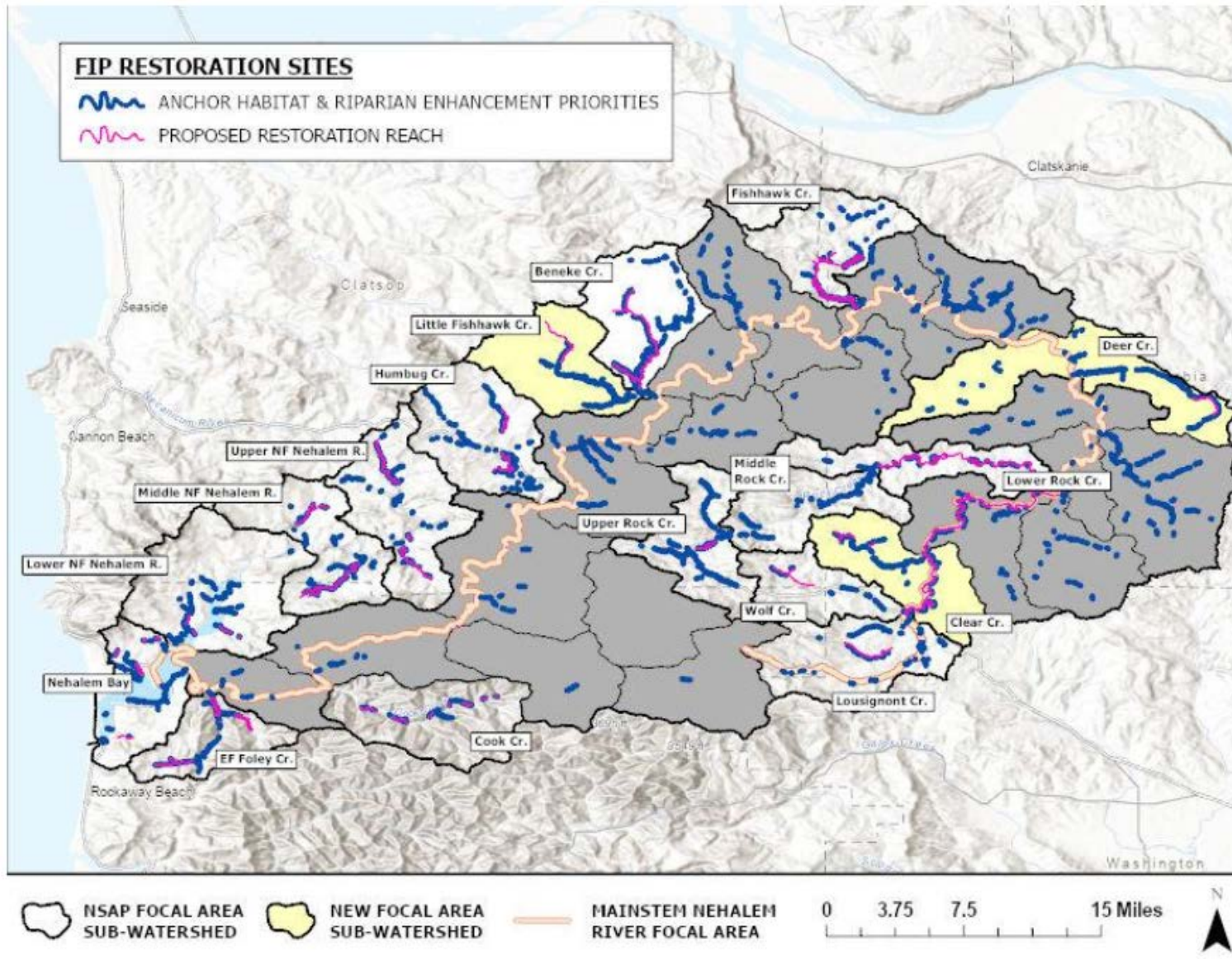
This initiative is a critical and timely effort to build coho population support by addressing limiting factors in an initial set of focal watersheds and increase species resilience to climate change. The initiative is directly targeting the OWEB adopted ecological priority of Coho habitat for the independent population in the Nehalem basin.



**Attachment A:** Initiative Map

**Attachment B:** Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet

Attachment A: Initiative Map



## Attachment B: Evaluation Criteria Ratings Worksheet

---

### REVIEW

The review below is the staff prepared evaluation of the application based on the evaluation criteria outlined in OAR 695-047-0060 incorporating feedback from the Expert Review Team.

**Expert Review Team Ranking: 5 of 5**

### EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### **(a) The extent to which the initiative addresses a Board-identified priority.**

##### **Strengths**

- The conservation strategies proposed under this FIP Initiative offer protection and benefits to Oregon Coast Coho.
- Lack of stream complexity and water quality are primary limiting factors in the Nehalem basin and are being addressed through this Initiative in focal watersheds.
- The Nehalem Coho Habitat Initiative uses a stronghold approach to protect and enhance anchor habitats most suitable for supporting coho in the Nehalem basin.

##### **Concerns**

- The application does not clearly describe the connection between proposed conservation actions, outputs, and desired ecological outcomes nor does it assign metrics to the goals of high-quality rearing habitats and reduced water temperature.
- The number of subwatersheds included in the initiative is unclear; the abstract states 16 and elsewhere in the application it states 12. It appears that the FIP Initiative includes three additional focal area sub-watersheds in the upper watershed that are not in the strategic action plan (SAP). This difference between the focal watersheds in the SAP and the FIP Initiative application is not described.

#### **(b) The capacity to partner, engage the community, and catalyze additional investments applied to activities within the initiative geography.**

##### **Strengths**

- The partners have worked together on several planning efforts since 1996, including the Nehalem River Watershed Assessment in 1998, the Nehalem Data Synthesis in 2008, the Nehalem Conservation Action Plan in 2010, and the Nehalem River Strategic Action Plan for the Protection & Restoration of Coho Salmon Habitat that provides the foundation for this FIP initiative.
- The application describes partners in the geography and implies additional investments that could be catalyzed through this FIP initiative.

##### **Concerns**

- The primary core partners committed to this initiative are the two watershed councils that will both serve as partnership leaders; however, their roles, as well as the role of program manager, project manager, and engagement staff to be hired are unclear.
- It is unclear how often the partnership meets, who chairs/facilitates the partnership meetings, who participates in the meetings, and how the meetings are structured.
- The outreach and engagement associated with the FIP Initiative is underdeveloped and lacks a communication strategy to engage a broad range of interested parties within the community through the life of the initiative.
- To date, tribal engagement has been limited to a tribal land acknowledgement at partnership meetings and initial contact with the Chinook Nation, Clatsop-Nehalem Confederated Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Grant Ronde, and Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians.

**(c) The performance history and composition of the partnership.**

**Strengths**

- The Nehalem Basin Partnership is nested within and supported by the larger Oregon Coast Coho Partnership.

**Concerns**

- The partnership centers around two watershed councils who are described to have worked together on several planning efforts but appear to have limited experience collaboratively implementing projects at this scale.
- The core partners of this FIP Initiative, as listed in the proposed work plan, have submitted few grant applications through OWEB's other grant programs in recent years, which makes it difficult to understand their recent performance history or likelihood of successful project implementation.
- It is unclear whether the right partners are involved given the proposal's ecological outcomes because the number and composition of core partners stated throughout the application and attachments differ, and the roles of the partners (Tillamook Estuary Partnership, Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District, industrial timber, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife) are not articulated.
- The partnership structure and how the partnership operates in practice are unclear from the application and the SAP.
- The Memorandum of Understanding provided with the application is unsigned.
- The application describes partnership decision-making as "consensus" of the partners and does not appear to have an internal vetting process, matrix, or criteria to prioritize projects for implementation.
- It is uncertain if the project partners have the capacity to achieve the scale of land acquisition proposed in this FIP Initiative when considering that the proposed acquisition lead has acquired 300 acres over the last 20 years and this initiative proposes 250 acres in the first two biennia.

**(d) The extent to which the proposed approach will make progress toward measurable ecological outcomes.**

**Strengths**

- The partnership demonstrates, through the SAP, a thorough understanding of the historic and present habitat conditions, limiting factors, and appropriate conservation activities, using a 'stronghold' approach with priority sub-watersheds where rearing quality and water quality efforts are focused.

### **Concerns**

- The SAP does not include a Theory of Change to describe the logic behind the proposed actions and the desired outcomes.
- The application does not clearly describe how the work plan was prioritized.
- The hiring and training process for new staff will likely delay implementation of the first biennium work plan.
- The rationale for not including priority barrier removal projects in the initiative is not clearly described in the application.
- Side-channel reconnection work is not proposed in this application, but reviewers expressed a need for it in the Nehalem basin.
- Riparian planting is proposed on 18.5 miles, but the application does not describe plant stewardship nor the long-term management and maintenance of riparian planting projects necessary for plant survival in the long term.
- The application states that water quality, specifically water temperature, is a limiting factor, but does not describe the relationship between the work of this FIP initiative and increasing global and ocean temperatures.
- The majority of the acquisition projects proposed in the work plan do not align with those described in the SAP, which are upland sites for the purpose of large wood recruitment. Without a clear connection to the SAP or the ecological objectives of the FIP initiative, the acquisitions appear opportunistic rather than strategic.
- The application does not describe restoration or long-term management of proposed acquisition project sites.

### **(e) The ability to track progress towards proposed outcomes.**

#### **Strengths**

- The application includes both implementation metrics and effectiveness indicators, although numeric targets are not yet identified.
- The SAP provides relevant watershed history and context and references. Climate impacts in the watershed are addressed.

#### **Concerns**

- The application focuses on implementation metrics rather than effectiveness indicators for water quality and habitat reconnection. For example, the number of evergreen trees planted and the amount of large wood added in-stream are implementation metrics that track outputs and do not indicate effectiveness of the conservation practices implemented. Without clear effectiveness indicators it will be difficult to track project outcomes.
- The initiative would benefit from establishing more meaningful metrics to track project outcomes. For example, instead of the number of evergreen trees planted, tree size and growth

rate could be used as indicators of shade. While the shade benefits of riparian planting would not likely be seen within the 6-year life of the FIP initiative, there is no discussion of how shade or other long-term project outcomes would be monitoring and tracked.

- The metric targets are not clearly described and are difficult to follow.
- The application does not include monitoring or tracking of instream metrics that could be indicators of project effectiveness.
- The application does not clearly describe how the proposed conservation outputs link to the ecological outcomes of this initiative and would benefit from further describing how change will be evaluated over time, the AQI metrics that will be monitored, and the frequency of monitoring.
- Monitoring is described as a per-project basis and will depend on the capacity of partners to monitor, indicating that there is not an initiative scale monitoring strategy planned.
- The application states that recovery plans and implementation reviews for coho salmon are touchstones for directing the work of the partnership but does not clearly describe how data will be managed, analyzed, and interpreted.

**(f) The scientific basis and planning tools that support the proposed Initiative.**

**Strengths**

- The SAP is well-written and based on science and technically appropriate models.
- The SAP includes long-term ecological goals through 2045.

**Concerns**

- The adaptive management plan would benefit from defining adaptation triggers and potential responses.
- A primary limiting factor to coho in the Nehalem basin is the lack of stream complexity, yet there is no discussion of the impact of upstream forestry and timber harvest activities on the geography other than to state a forthcoming habitat conservation plan.
- Overall, the desired ecological outcomes are not well-phased into the work of the 6-year initiative.

**(g) The extent to which the allocation of funds across proposed grant types will support the achievement of the proposed ecological outcomes.**

**Strengths**

- The application seeks funds in all eligible grant types, except water acquisition, to support the achievement of the proposed ecological outcomes.

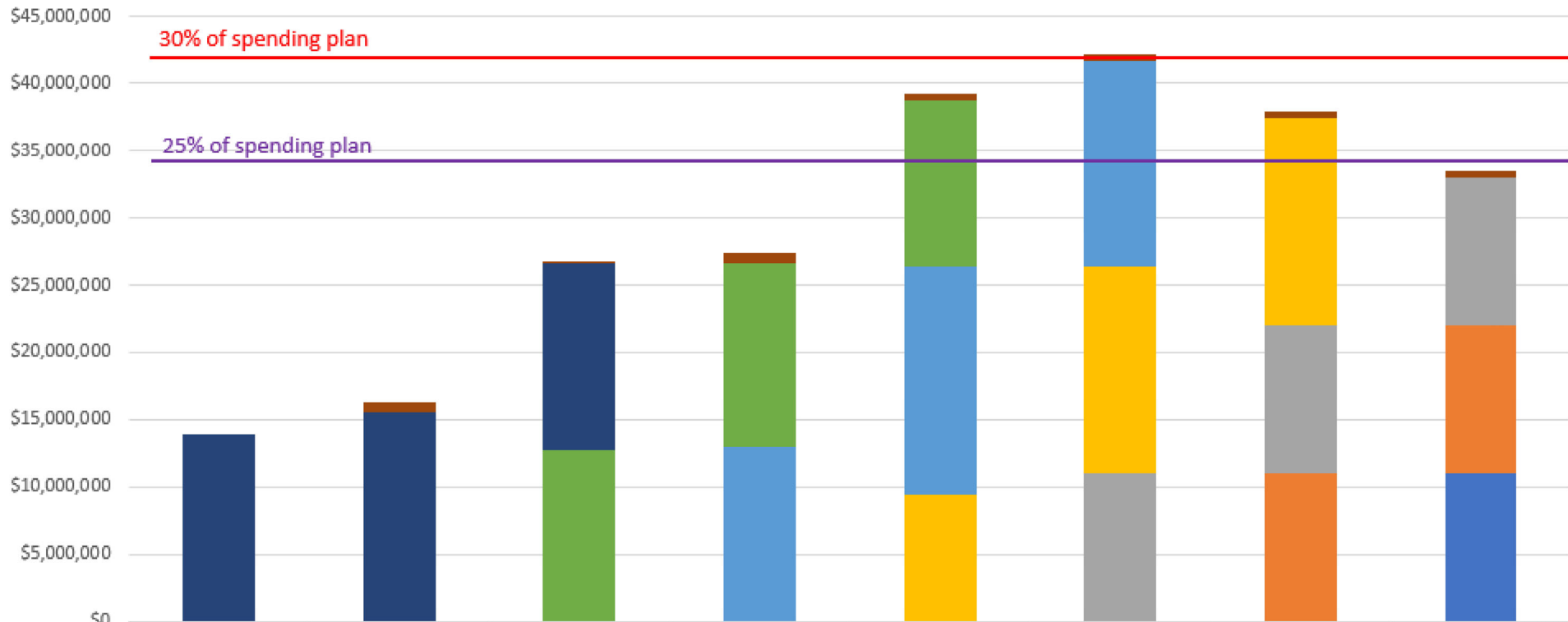
**Concerns**

- The proposed land acquisition projects in the initiative work plan differ from the priority acquisitions identified in the SAP and raise uncertainty as to whether those actions are needed to achieve the proposed ecological outcomes.
- The proposed conservation outputs for miles of large wood installed exceed the strategic action plan target in nearly half of the focal watersheds, indicating that an opportunistic, rather than

strategic, approach may have been used to develop the work plan for this initiative. While implementing projects where there are willing landowners can be a prioritization strategy, this initiative appears to be prioritizing projects in places where it may not be needed.

- The application does not propose engagement in higher priority ecological areas to build landowner willingness.

**Attachment C. FIP Spending Bar Graph**  
*Proposed 2023-2025 Awards*



	2015-17	2017-19	2019-21	2021-23	2023-25	2025-27	2027-29	2029-31
Effectiveness Monitoring		\$750,000	\$150,000	\$750,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
FIP 2015	\$13,895,970	\$15,506,750	\$13,931,000					
FIP 2019			\$12,669,146	\$13,749,224	\$12,313,620			
FIP 2021				\$12,909,880	\$16,928,406	\$15,274,495		
FIP 2023					\$9,448,863	\$15,430,814	\$15,427,649	
FIP 2025						\$11,000,000	\$11,000,000	\$11,000,000
FIP 2027							\$11,000,000	\$11,000,000
FIP 2029								\$11,000,000

■ FIP 2029 ■ FIP 2027 ■ FIP 2025 ■ FIP 2023 ■ FIP 2021 ■ FIP 2019 ■ FIP 2015 ■ Effectiveness Monitoring