



empowering the lasting conservation of fish and wildlife and citizen enjoyment of our natural resources

## Grant Application Cover Sheet

Please complete the following coversheet. See the grant application guidelines on our website [www.myowf.org/grants](http://www.myowf.org/grants) to complete your application. Volunteer organizations without nonprofit status must have a tax-exempt fiscal sponsor. You may scan and email this cover sheet and your application.

### About You

- 1 Project Title: East Cascades Oak Habitat - Monitoring Framework
- 2 Organization: East Cascades Oak Partnership
- 3 volunteer organizations without nonprofit status, list your fiscal sponsor:Columbia Land Trust
- 4 Tax id number (not required for governmental applicants): 94-3140861
- 5 Project Manager Name:Lindsay Cornelius Title: Natural Area Manager
- 6 City: Hood River Address: 216 Cascade Ave, Ste B Zip Code: 97031
- 7 Phone (office): (541)-436-4210 Phone (mobile): (360)-921-1073 email: lindsayc@columbialandtrust.org

Tell us about yourself (brief biographical statement): The East Cascades Oak Partnership is a group of organizations, agencies, tribes, businesses, and individuals who know and love the Columbia River Gorge and the East Cascades as a place with thriving wildlife, a vibrant natural resource-based economy, and incredible beauty. We have recognized the importance of Oregon white oak systems to our quality of life and to the well-being of hundreds of species of plants and wildlife, with whom we share our home. We are collaborating to leverage resources, share knowledge, and implement conservation strategies that will help protect vulnerable oak systems, encouraging more reciprocal human interactions with these important resources and improving outcomes for people, oaks, and wildlife.

- 8
- 9 Have you applied for a grant from Oregon Wildlife Foundation before? Yes  No
- 10 If "yes", what was the name of the project?

### About Your Proposed Project

- 11 What type of project are you proposing? Fish  Wildlife  Other
- 12 Will it address an Oregon Conservation Strategy habitat or species? Yes  No   
If "yes", please name the habitat and/or species addressed:Oak Woodlands, Lewis's Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, COA 125 Wasco Oaks.
- 13 Proposed start date: October 2020 Anticipated end date: October 2021
- 14 Project Location (attach map): Nearest town or city: Dufur County: Wasco
- 15 Has a local, state, or federal biologist reviewed this project? Yes  No   
If "yes", what is their name? Jeremy Thompson, Chase Brown, and Katie Pierson (ODFW) Phone: (860)-508-5863 email: katie.pierson@usda.gov
- 16 If "no", what is your plan for an external review of the project?
- 17 Estimated project cost: \$34,500 Funding you are requesting: \$5,000  
How will you use the requested funds? We will hire consultant(s) to help us develop disturbance event monitoring protocols and a rapid ecological integrity assessments for East Cascade Oregon white oak systems, and build a data set that supports development of best management practices and targets land protection and restoration efforts where they can be most effective.
- 18 What will you accomplish (ex.,stream miles enhanced, acres planted? 4 standardized monitoring protocols, 1 rapid ecological integrity assessment tool, and 20 people trained in the use of those tools.
- 19



empowering the lasting conservation of fish and wildlife and citizen enjoyment of our natural resources

20 Check the following box to be added to our email distribution list:

### Project Abstract/Summary

21 Limited to 750 characters. *Do not begin your narrative here or link to other pages:* Oregon white oak systems east of the Cascades are unique, understudied, and critically important to biodiversity and climate resilience in the state of Oregon. There are few published management recommendations for these systems, and increasing funding and interest in managing for wildfire and wildlife. ECOP will hire consultant(s) to develop disturbance event monitoring protocols for wildfire, prescribed fire, mechanical thinning, and fuels reduction, as well as a rapid ecological integrity assessment tool we can train partners to deploy. These tools will help us build data sets that support development of best management practices and strategically target land protection and restoration efforts.

### Certifications

22  Check here to certify that you have already or will obtain necessary permits from all requisite agencies *as applicable to the proposed project*.

23  I have included pre-project pictures or video as well as a picture or video entry of myself.

24  I understand that I'm required to submit a Project Completion Report, copies of any publications or social media posts crediting the Foundation's support, and post-project pictures at the completion of my project.

25  I warrant that I am the legal owner of all pictures and video submitted in application and grant permission for the Foundation to reproduce, exhibit, or publish them for all general purposes in relation to Oregon Wildlife Foundation's work.

26 Signature of Applicant or Authorizing Official: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. K. S.", written over a horizontal line.

Stewardship Director



*Hikers on Mill Creek Ridge follow an oak ecotone in Wasco County, Oregon<sup>1</sup>*

## Project Narrative

Oregon white oak occupies diverse niches in the East Cascades. A lone oak might be massive and spreading in a native bunchgrass savanna or one among thousands huddled together on an exposed slope, dwarfed by the wind. They persist in shallow soils, in fertile soils, among pine and fir, in meadows or talus. They stand alone, in clumps, on mounds, or like shrubs. They support hundreds of species of wildlife with their acorn crops, fungal and plant associations, and their abundant cavities. They withstand fire, re-sprout following disturbance, and, by virtue of their hollow cores and gaping cavities, provide the resources of both a living and a dead tree.

Oaks provide shade in harsh environments for people and livestock, exhibit hardiness in response to fire and grazing, and support abundant game species like deer, elk and turkey. Their trunks are energy-rich, dense wood that make excellent firewood and strong boards, their fire-resistant crowns grow acorns that feed people and wildlife, house an abundance of neotropical migratory songbirds that fill our skies with song, shade wildflowers that feed important pollinators, and sequester carbon less vulnerable to release during wildfires. They provide a beautiful backdrop for popular mountain biking and hiking trails that are at the heart of our tourism economy, are inspiration for artists and philosophers, and provide a fascinating landscape for curious minds to explore. Their natural fire resistance can be a buffer against catastrophic wildfire.

The East Cascades Oak Partnership (ECOP) formed in 2017 to coordinate, catalyze, and amplify the impact of conservation efforts in oak systems in the East Cascades ecoregion by partners and interested landowners. Our membership now includes more than 150 people representing a variety of tribes, federal, state, and local agencies, land trusts, conservation districts, educational non-profits, small businesses, and private landowners. ECOP serves an area roughly bounded by the Yakama Nation Indian Reservation to the north, the Warm Springs Indian Reservation to the south, the Cascade Mountains to the west, and the shrub steppe of the Columbia Plateau to the east. This geography is anchored by partners operating primarily within communities of the Columbia River gorge in both Oregon and Washington.

---

<sup>1</sup> Photos by Lindsay Cornelius unless otherwise noted



Our vision is that oak systems are abundant, diverse, and healthy, supporting rich biodiversity and human uses for generations to come. ECOP empowers people to make decisions and take actions that improve outcomes for Oregon white oak systems, which are a priority habitat in ODFW's Oregon Conservation Strategy and which support priority species Lewis's Woodpecker and the Olive-sided Flycatcher in the Wasco Oaks Conservation Opportunity Area.

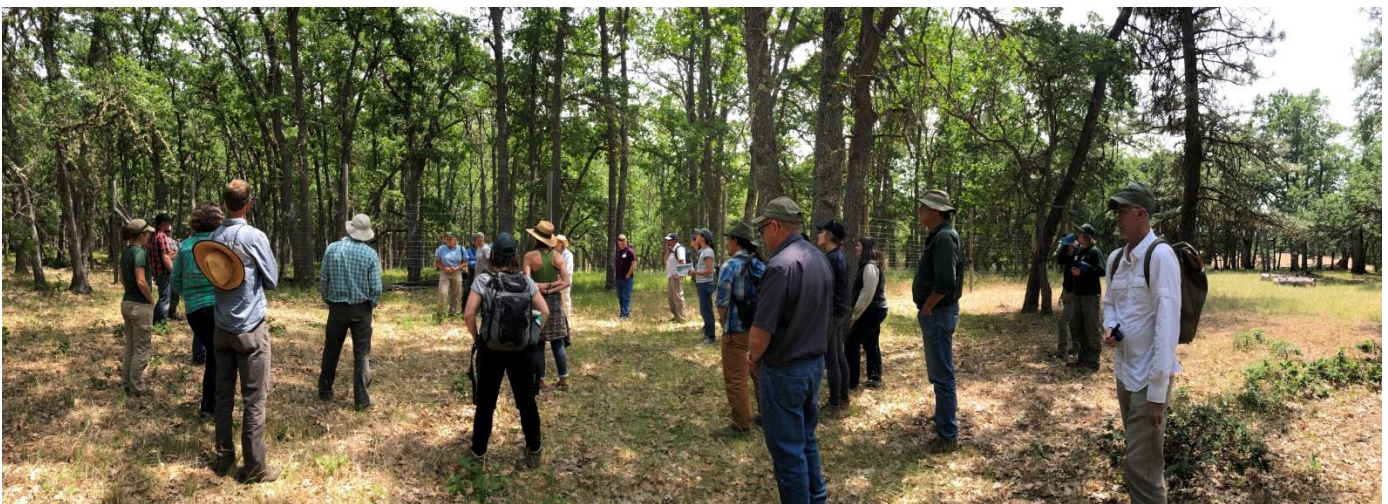


*Lewis' Woodpecker, photo by Tom Gaskill*



*Western Tanager on Oregon white oak limb*

From the beginning, ECOP has prioritized building a shared base of understanding among partners and stakeholders who are highly motivated to participate, in the hopes of learning more about East Cascade oak systems largely ignored by academia. The USFS collated available research and case studies in 2014, offering management recommendations and identifying key knowledge gaps. The management recommendations, which are the only published recommendations *specific to East Cascade oak systems*, did not consider the diversity of oak system types in the East Cascades and caused alarm among resource managers.



*The East Cascades Oak Partnership on a Klickitat Wildlife Area field trip.*

ECOP recently completed a multi-year strategic planning process funded by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. Two of our highest priority strategies include 1) conserving and connecting the most intact, functional oak systems, and 2) developing and implementing best management practices specific to East Cascade oak systems. Both of these strategies depend on a deeper understanding of historic and current conditions, as well as the potential range of variability in plant associations, structure, and function. The latter also depends on understanding system response to disturbance.

ECOP and the Wasco Forest Collaborative were recently awarded (June 2020) grant funding from ODF's Technical Assistance Program to assist USFS Mt. Hood National Forest with monitoring protocols for four disturbance events – wildfire, prescribed fire, mechanical thinning, and fuels reduction - that will help inform future management. ECOP also received a grant from the Land Trust Alliance's Advancing Conservation Excellence grant program (July 2020) to develop an assessment tool that will help ECOP prioritize parcels for conservation and restoration, and serve as a starting point for more in depth ecological integrity assessments and future effectiveness monitoring.

A grant from OWF would provide critical matching funds to support and expand the capacity of both of these projects, allowing ECOP partners to implement the assessments across a wider geography in Oregon and present a stronger case to OWEB when ECOP applies to the Focused Investment Partnership program in 2021. OWF's investment would help set the stage for a deeper understanding of under-studied oak systems, identify intact oak systems under threat of development for conservation and ecological stewardship, and catalyze the protection and enhancement of thousands of acres of priority habitat in Oregon.

With OWF funding we propose to:

1. Adapt the Washington DNR Natural Heritage Program's Ecological Integrity Assessment (EIA) tool into a rapid assessment tool to diagnose existing condition and potential restoration at the site scale.
2. Prioritize geographies, coordinate and train partners for assessment tool deployment
3. Integrate the EIA into disturbance event monitoring protocols and deploy in Central Wasco County

During our strategic planning period, we classified six oak system types (riparian oak, oak savanna and open oak woodland, closed oak woodland, oak forest, mixed oak-conifer forest, and conifer forest with oak), mapped them using GNN plot data adapted by OSU's Landscape Ecology, Modeling, Mapping, and Analysis (LEMMA) lab, and then developed a prioritization model to predict where the largest contiguous, most climate-resilient patches of oak with high levels of oak system native species diversity and high levels of predicted occurrence of listed or sensitive oak-associated species might occur. The resulting map was intended to inform the partnership where the most intact, functional oak systems are *predicted* to occur, warranting deeper on-the-ground investigation. We will use the assessment tool described in this proposal to do that deeper, on-the-ground investigation.

We will apply the assessment tool first to areas predicted by our model or reported by our partners to have high quality habitat or to be critically important for landscape function, then to lands that are adjacent to existing conserved lands (anchor sites), and finally to areas that establish connectivity between anchor sites. The results will inform priorities for acquisition, restoration funding, and potential collaborations between ECOP partners, agencies, and private landowners.

Specifically, matching funds from OWF would be used to develop protocols and train volunteers, partners, and potentially consultants, to deploy the assessment tool and disturbance monitoring protocols as described above.

### ***Deliverables***

1. Develop standardized monitoring protocols for 4 disturbance events
2. Develop a rapid assessment tool for current condition and a prioritization process for conservation and restoration strategies
3. Train volunteers, partners, and contractors to deploy the above tools

## **Budget**

See attached.

## **Timeline**

Work will commence immediately and conclude by October 2021 following the approximate timeline:

August - September 2020:	Select contractors and refine project guidance, including priority management questions
October – February 2021:	Work with contractor on protocol design
March - June 2021:	Test, refine, and deploy monitoring protocols and assessment tool
March – October 2021:	Train volunteers, partners, and contractors on tool deployment

## **Qualifications and Resources**

East Cascades Oak Partnership manager, Lindsay Cornelius, has been working in the oak landscape for 17 years as stewardship staff for Columbia Land Trust. She has overseen oak restoration efforts and effectiveness monitoring, and mentored graduate students in Land Trust sponsored research projects. As the manager for the East Cascades Oak Partnership, Lindsay facilitates partnership meetings and strategic planning, manages ECOP steering and technical committees, writes funding proposals, and coordinates partners at the state and local levels.

East Cascades Oak Partnership Coordinator, Mary Bushman, is a botanist and ecologist with extensive knowledge of oak and wetland systems, monitoring approaches, and experimental design. Mary worked for City of Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services before retiring to the Columbia River gorge. She works part-time supporting ECOP planning and implementation work, coordinating meetings, writing grants, and supervising the implementation of ECOP sponsored projects. In her spare time, she implements restoration and monitoring projects on her own oak woodland near Mosier, Oregon.

In addition to Columbia Land Trust's ECOP-dedicated staff, ECOP has active and engaged steering and technical committees that provide feedback and advance projects. In addition to these formal committees, ad hoc working groups form from the broader membership to support project implementation. We have several volunteer working groups ready to support this project:

### Research Prioritization Working Group

*Columbia Land Trust will coordinate the ECOP technical committee, USFS personnel, academics and external advisors to identify and prioritize research questions that address key management uncertainties. Standardized monitoring protocols will be built around these priorities.*

Current working group members: Molly Jennings (WA DNR), Lisa Naas Cook (Columbia River Gorge Commission), Whitney Olsker (USFS – Mt. Hood NF), Rick Lancaster (USFS – Mt. Hood NF), Christina Mead (USFS – Mt Hood NF), Lindsay Cornelius (CLT/ECOP), Mary Bushman (ECOP/CLT)

### Classification Assessment Working Group

*Columbia Land Trust will work with partners to assess classification systems in use by various agencies and identify which system or adaptation of systems shall be used as a basis for the standardized monitoring protocols. The classification will allow us to characterize oak system types at the site scale and compare response to disturbance events in similar oak systems across the region.*

Current working group members: Joe Rocchio (WA DNR), Lisa Naas Cook (CRGC), Doug Glavich (USFS – ecology group), Andrew Owen (NRCS State Forester in Oregon), Katie Pierson (NRCS/ODFW), Mary Bushman (ECOP Coordinator), Lindsay Cornelius (CLT/ECOP)

#### Standardized Monitoring Protocol Framework Development Working Group

*Review draft monitoring protocols produced by consultant.*

Current working group members: Sharon Frazey (Mount Adams Resource Stewards), Cathy Flick (USFS retired), Keyna Bugner (WA DNR), Noel Plemmons (WA DNR), Chase Brown (ODFW), Katie Pierson (NRCS/ODFW), Whitney Olsker (USFS), Kate Williams (WA DNR Forest Health and Prescribed Fire Programs), Rick Lancaster (USFS), Ben Hartmann (WDFW), Mary Bushman (ECOP Coordinator), Lindsay Cornelius (CLT/ECOP)

#### Protocol Field Testing and Implementation Working Group

*Field test and make recommendations to consultant re: monitoring protocols.*

Current working group members: Ben Hartmann (WDFW), Cathy Flick (USFS retired), Keyna Bugner (WA DNR), Bill Weiler (Sandy River Watershed Council), Noel Plemmons (WA DNR), Chase Brown (ODFW), Katie Pierson (NRCS/ODFW), Rick Lancaster (USFS), Mary Bushman (ECOP), Lindsay Cornelius (ECOP/CLT)

### **Project Outcomes**

Threats to Oregon white oak systems east of the Cascades are many and complex.

- Oak occurs at low elevation in the wildland urban interface. As population growth accelerates, the wildland urban interface expands, putting stress on oak systems and putting people in the path of wildfire.
- Baby boomers are aging, setting the stage for a massive transfer of land between generations and priming the potential for large scale changes in land ownership and management over the next two decades.
- Industrial timber companies structured as timber investment management organizations increasingly sell land to the highest bidder, and entrepreneurs purchase land for vineyard development and second homes.
- Grazing practices appropriate for European grasses are still practiced 170 years post-European settlement, stressing native perennial grasses and flowering forbs and causing dramatic shifts in plant populations toward non-native, invasive annual grasses and weeds, dramatically reducing pollinator habitat and contributing to altered fire behavior and intensity.
- Travel Oregon promotes the Columbia River Gorge, bringing unprecedented numbers of tourists to the region, overwhelming the carrying capacity of recreational infrastructure at a time when funding for public agencies managing recreation and the plant and wildlife species impacted by it is limited.
- Increasing numbers of homes are dedicated to temporary housing to accommodate tourists, necessitating an expansion of housing options for permanent residents into undeveloped, more affordable areas in wildlands.
- Fire suppression contributes to elevated fuel levels and altered fire behavior. Fuels reduction treatments are applied uniformly or without regard to the consequences of stump-sprout, exacerbating the problem and damaging important habitat features.
- Increased drought and soaring temperatures combine with fierce winds to drive catastrophic wildfires, threatening communities and forests across a region that is now grossly underprepared for fire.
- Wildfire smoke threatens human health and businesses across an increasingly long fire season.



- Oak tree crowns die back and re-sprout in catastrophic fire conditions and in response to fuels reduction practices, reducing the number of larger, mature, single-stemmed oaks providing cavities, sloughing bark, and other habitat features for wildlife.

Despite these daunting challenges, much of the landscape has yet to be fragmented by development, with great potential over the next decade for landscape scale conservation and management across public and private lands. This project will help partners understand how natural disturbance events and management interventions impact oak systems, building a data set that will help us responsibly and effectively steward and protect these critically important priority habitats.

The attached graphics (ECOP Impacts and Outcomes) show how oaks are impacted by human behaviors and how we hope to affect change. The red circles illustrate how this project interacts with our strategic plan and desired outcomes.



*Fir encroachment due to fire suppression.*



*Oak encroachment due to fire suppression.*



*Wildfire on Rowena Crest in Wasco County.*



*Measuring oak stump sprout 15-years post-thinning.*





Photo by Doug Gorsline



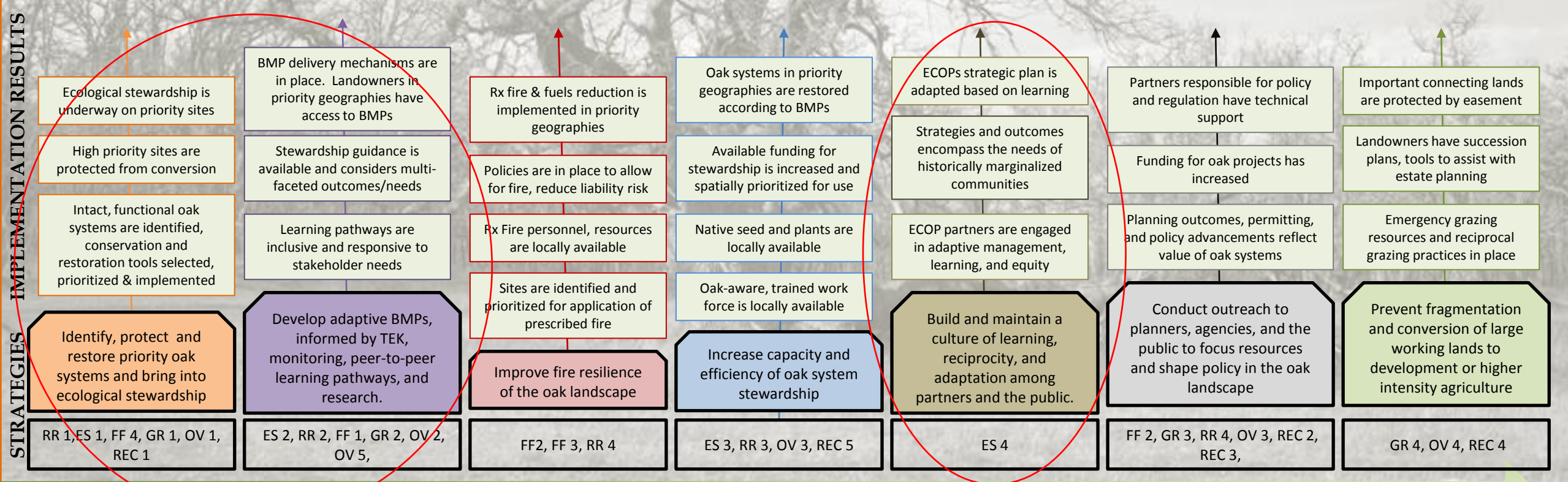
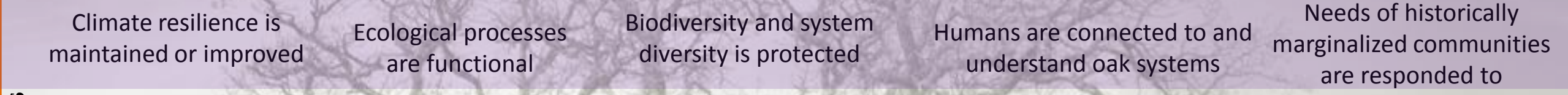
Photo by Pete LaRose





Your budget should detail sources of support and expenses for your proposed project. Please do not use any format other than the one provided here. Instructions have been inserted as notes; put your cursor over the marked cell to read.

<b>Project Budget</b>			
<b>Project Revenue</b>	<b>Cash</b>	<b>In-Kind</b>	<b>Committed/Pending</b>
<i>Oregon Wildlife Foundation request</i> →	\$5,000.00		Pending
ODF Technical Assistance Grant	\$22,000.00		Committed
OR ACE grant	\$7,500.00		Committed
<b>revenues</b>	\$34,500.00	\$0.00	
<b>Total Project Support</b>			\$ 34,500.00
<b>Project Expenses</b>			<b>Amount</b>
Contractors for protocol development, deployment			\$31,500.00
Mileage/travel			\$2,000.00
Supplies/materials			\$1,000.00
<b>Total Project Expenses</b>			\$34,500.00
<i>Balanced budget? This cell should read "\$0.00" →</i>			\$0.00



Generally higher priority strategies **East Cascades Oak Partnership Theory of Change** Generally lower priority strategies



# ECOP Implementation Results Metrics 2020-2030

Identify, protect and restore priority oak systems and bring into ecological stewardship

RR 1, ES 1, FF 4, GR 1, OV 1, REC 1

Intact, functional oak systems are identified, conservation and restoration tools selected, prioritized & implemented	High priority sites are protected from conversion	Ecological stewardship is underway on priority sites
Ecological integrity assessment tool deployed in 100% of priority areas accessible to the partnership.	Top 5 priority acquisitions complete protecting intact, functional oak systems.	BMPs implemented on 5,000 priority acres.

Develop adaptive BMPs, informed by TEK, monitoring, peer-to-peer learning pathways, and research.

ES 2, RR 2, FF 1, GR 2, OV 2, OV 5,

Learning pathways are inclusive and responsive to stakeholder needs	Stewardship guidance is available and considers multi-faceted outcomes/needs	BMP delivery mechanisms are in place. Landowners in priority geographies have access to BMPs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•3 community learning projects are underway</li> <li>•Research and monitoring projects are underway on top 5 priority management questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Classification system is adopted by partners</li> <li>•Community learning project results are integrated into BMP tool design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•BMP tool is accessible to 100% of landowners and managers across priority areas</li> <li>•All ECOP partners are using adaptive BMP tool</li> </ul>

Improve fire resilience of the oak landscape

FF2, FF 3, RR 4

Sites are identified and prioritized for application of prescribed fire	Rx Fire personnel, resources are locally available	Policies are in place to allow for fire, reduce liability risk	Rx fire & fuels reduction is implemented in priority geographies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•EIA tool includes fire readiness assessment</li> <li>•100% of priority areas accessible assessed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Local crew developed</li> <li>•Burn boss and certified burner certifications earned by 1-2 new partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Certified burner program active</li> <li>•Strict negligence policy replaced by gross negligence policy</li> <li>•Insurance options accessible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•10 prescribed fire projects implemented successfully in priority areas.</li> <li>•Local crew and certified burner resources active by 2026; burn area increasing yearly</li> </ul>

Increase capacity and efficiency of oak system stewardship

ES 3, RR 3, OV 3, REC 5

Oak-aware, trained work force is locally available	Native seed and plants are locally available	Available funding for stewardship is increased and spatially prioritized for use	Oak systems in priority geographies are restored according to BMPs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•2 locally supported, ECOP certified crews available</li> <li>•Work force training/certification available to forestry crews working on oak projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Seed collection and grow-out capacity expanded at local nurseries</li> <li>•Plant materials center and BFI native seeds are using E.Cascades seed sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•&gt;50% of existing funding for fuels reduction is focused in priority areas</li> <li>•Available funding for understory restoration and fuels reduction doubled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•BMPs implemented on 5,000 priority acres</li> </ul>

Build and maintain a culture of learning, reciprocity, and adaptation among partners and the public.

ES 4

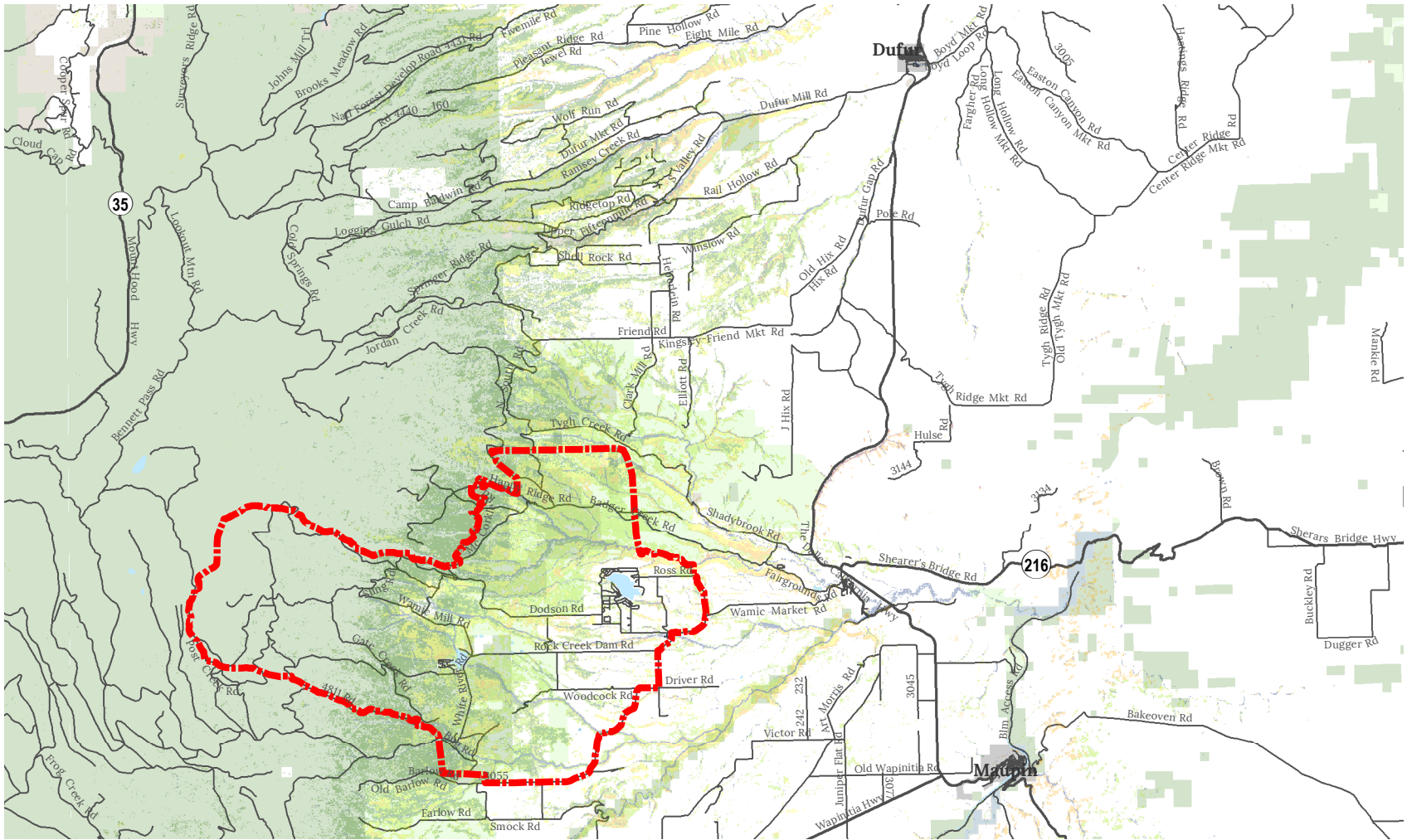
ECOP partners are engaged in adaptive management, learning, and equity	Strategies and outcomes encompass the needs of historically marginalized communities	ECOPs strategic plan is adapted based on learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•100% of core partners are participating in adaptive elements of strategic plan (reporting/adapting)</li> <li>•Learning pathways include locally-adapted equity learning focused on tribes, LatinX, and other POC.</li> </ul>	Equity learning and relationships reflect ECOP work responds to the needs and values of underrepresented communities	

Conduct outreach to planners, agencies, and the public to focus resources and shape policy in the oak landscape


FF 2, GR 3, RR 4, OV 3, REC 2, REC 3,

Prevent fragmentation and conversion of large working lands to development or higher intensity agriculture


GR 4, OV 4, REC 4




# East Cascades Oak Partnership Wasco Forest Collaborative Monitoring Study Area

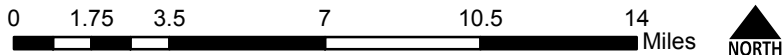
 Monitoring Project Study Area

## Local Roads

 Local Roads

 Interstates

 Highways



Phil Chang  
Federal Forest Restoration Program Lead  
Oregon Department of Forestry

Re: Barlow Oak Treatment Monitoring

November 13, 2019

Dear Mr. Chang,

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Wasco County Forest Collaborative. The Barlow Oak Treatment Monitoring proposal is an exciting opportunity to invest in on the ground monitoring that will inform future forest restoration projects and foster stronger collaborative partnerships. Wasco County Forest Collaborative members have endorsed the proposal and provided consensus support for the work.

The Barlow Oak Treatment Monitoring proposal builds on a strong history of collaboration. The Wasco County Forest Collaborative, an appointed body of diverse members, worked for four years with the Mount Hood National Forest to design the Rocky Restoration Project. In parallel, agency partners from Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA Forest Service, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Forestry, Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District, and private landowners worked together to identify strategic adjacent lands that would help the community improve landscape and community resiliency. More recently, the collaborative has partnered with East Cascades Oak Partnership and Columbia Land Trust to monitor the implementation of our oak restoration and fuels reduction work.

The project is an “all-lands” project that includes the Rocky Restoration Project on National Forest System lands, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife White River Wildlife Refuge, and private forestlands in the Pine Hollow Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Cross-boundary treatments are essential to the success of this effort given the checkboard nature of many of the federal, state, and private forestlands in the area. The Rocky Restoration Project will utilize the first Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) agreement on the Barlow Ranger District and will leverage state forestry and NRCS resources to complete work across federal, state, and private lands. Monitoring work will also be conducted on different ownerships to help understand how different management regimes influence oak restoration outcomes.

The oak treatments being proposed for implementation and monitoring have been identified as high priority in the Wasco County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), Oregon Department of Forestry Landscape Scale Oak Habitat Restoration Initiative, NRCS East Cascades Forest Health Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS), and the East Cascades Oak Woodland Conservation Opportunity Area as identified by the Oregon Conservation Strategy by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Each of these partner organizations and plans recognize the value of monitoring, yet partner agencies consistently lack the capacity to conduct monitoring work.



Support from Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Restoration Program will be critical to establishing the framework, protocols, and baseline monitoring information.

Wildfire risk reduction is a high priority across the West, and particularly in Wasco County, an often-overlooked part of the Mount Hood National Forest. Wasco County has experienced large wildfires in recent years that have threatened high value natural resource assets and communities. In 2018 the Substation Fire burned more than 78,000 acres and in the same year the Box Car Fire burned more than 100,000 acres, both entirely within Wasco County. The Rocky Restoration Project encompasses the majority of the historic Rocky Burn, a wildfire that burned much of the project area in 1973.

Immediate action is needed to ensure that future wildfires will not adversely impact the unique Oregon white oak habitat and human communities in the project area, and monitoring will play a critical role in understanding the impacts of proposed treatments in meeting stakeholder interests and ecological restoration goals. Forest restoration and wildfire risk reduction treatments are intended to achieve multiple resource objectives through this project including improved wildlife habitat, restoration of natural process and functions, protection of soil resources, and production of timber and local biomass to forest products businesses.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this important request. Please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Spaeth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "S".

Andrew Spaeth  
Coordinator  
Wasco County Forest Collaborative  
[Wascoforest@gmail.com](mailto:Wascoforest@gmail.com)  
541.288.4107 (cell)



---

**File Code:** 2020  
**Date:** November 8, 2019

Oregon Federal Forest Restoration Program Grant Committee

To Whom It May Concern;

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Mt. Hood National Forest, Barlow Ranger District. The Federal Forest Restoration Proposal for Oak Treatment Monitoring on the District is an exciting opportunity to accelerate oak treatment on more than 4,000 acres of current Planning Areas. The proposal area includes the Rocky Restoration Project, Grasshopper and South Penn on National Forest System lands.

The Forest Service has been engaged with the Eastern Cascades Oak Partnership (ECOP) since its inception to understand how best to manage oak on the District. ECOP proposes to be the technical service provider and technical committee partnering with Portland State University graduate students, local partners, and contractors to develop and test standardized monitoring protocols for a variety of disturbances, including after wildfire, pre and post prescribed fire and oak release from conifer, fuels reduction, and oak thinning. Testing these monitoring protocols on National Forest lands scheduled for treatment over the next three years will establish a baseline data set that can be used to inform site-specific management choices and implement effectiveness monitoring when work is complete. In addition, these protocols can be deployed across public and private lands managed by other ECOP partners, furthering a critical strategic objective for the partnership and building a much broader and stronger data set from which to work.

Monitoring plots and creation of best management practices (BMPs) in Oak Woodlands is a great need for the Forest Service, since silvicultural treatments will be prescribed in the next year. Working collaboratively with technical service providers will inform local development of BMPs and allow for more efficient collaboration when talking about oak woodlands in the future.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like more information.

Sincerely,

KAMERON C. SAM  
District Ranger

cc: Mt. Hood NR Staff

