



## PROJECT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

### Zoom meeting via web

February 11, 2021

| Committee Members |                 |              | Staff           |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Dave Cummings     | Brad Bales      | Brad Staples | Nicole Nordin   |
| Gordon King       | Garth Wyatt     | Jim Irving   | Tim Greseth     |
| Marcia Hartman    | Doug Nelson     | Lori Steel   | Hannah Carter   |
| Carl Burnham      | Uriah Stockdale |              | Sarah Armstrong |
| Blaine Dickason   | Susan Foster    |              | Kalei Augustine |

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 AM.

### Meeting Minutes Review

Meeting minutes from the September 11, 2020 Zoom meeting were reviewed and approved.

### Project Funds

The foundation has approximately \$100,000 available in unrestricted funds at the start of the year and the Project Committee agreed to budget \$25,000 per quarter for grantmaking.

### New Project Funding Requests

#### Project 21-01 Explorer Packs

The Audubon Society requested \$5,000 in funding to support 20 Harney County youth education “Explorer Packs” and associated materials. Items in their request include backpacks, bird books, binoculars, and various other materials. The materials provided will be used in Harney County youth education programs. This program is part of Audubon’s strategy in Eastern Oregon to engage the community, and particularly youth and families, in positive birding and conservation experiences.

- Meets our match requirements
- Meets our funding guidelines
- Does not address a particular species
- Does not have a letter of support

A motion was made and seconded to approve the requested funding. The motion was approved.

#### Project 21-02 Vesper Sparrow Hatch Metric

The Klamath Bird Observatory (KBO) requested \$5,000 to purchase 20 CTT Tags (automated radio telemetry tags) and one TT Locator to track young vesper sparrows. The Oregon vesper sparrow is an Oregon Conversation Strategy Species and considered of high conservation concern by natural resource entities within its breeding and wintering range. Recent estimates suggest the Oregon vesper sparrow population is only 2,000-3,000 individuals. The bird is

currently under review for listing under the Endangered Species Act (2017). KBO has already gained specific information on local nest success and migration return rates. This initial research has identified a potential issue with return rates for second year birds. KBO's current proposal will allow them to better understand winter mortality rates of young birds.

- Meets our match requirements
- Meets our funding guidelines
- Addresses and OCS species – Vesper Sparrow
- Includes a letter of support from Steve Niemela at ODFW

A motion was made and seconded to approve the requested funding. The motion was approved.

### **21-03 Pond Turtle Distribution**

Northwest Ecological Research Initiative (NERI) requested **\$5,000** to help fund surveys of Northwestern Pond Turtles in Yamhill County using volunteers. Funds will primarily be used for salaries of coordinators. The Northwestern Pond Turtle is listed as endangered in Washington and threatened in Oregon. It has also been petitioned for federal listing under the Endangered Species Act (currently listed as a federal species of concern) and is a priority species in the Oregon Conservation Strategy. Little is known about the distribution of the Northwestern Pond Turtle in Yamhill County.

- Meets our match requirements
- Meets our funding guidelines
- Addresses an OCS species – Northwestern Pond Turtle
- Includes a letter of support from Susan Barnes at ODFW

A motion was made and seconded to approve the requested funding. The motion was approved.

### **21-04 Tufted Puffin Monitoring**

Oregon State University requested **\$7,081** to develop simple and effective non-invasive methods to enhance the understanding of tufted puffin ecology and population dynamics on the Oregon coast. Requested funds would be used for salaries, expenses, and equipment. This work will enhance knowledge of the tufted puffin, help answer why it is in decline in its southern reaches and add genetic data to help determine if there are differences between the northern and southern populations.

- Meets our match requirements
- Meets our funding guidelines
- Addresses an OCS species – Tufted Puffins
- Includes a letter of support from Shawn Stevenson at USFWS

A motion was made and seconded to approve the requested funding contingent upon approval of other funding and limited to non-labor costs. Tim committed to trying crowd funding to recover the grant amount. After an extensive discussion, the motion was approved on a divided vote.

### **21-05 Fence Markers**

The Harney Soil, Water and Conservation District is requesting **\$7,350** for fence markers and wildlife water trough escape ramps. A significant cause of death and injury to animals such as raptors, ducks and sage grouse is collisions with wire fences. Collisions are especially likely to occur at dawn or dusk when the light is dim. Fence markers help animals see the fence wire before a collision. Another cause of death to animals is stranding in water troughs. Wildlife escape ramps provide a secure way for animals to get out of water troughs and also prevents the water from becoming contaminated from botulism. The program priority focus is sage grouse conservation, however the fence markers and escape ramps will benefit multiple other species including bats, birds, deer, elk, pronghorn, rodents, rabbits, squirrels and insects.

- Meets our match requirements
- Meets our funding guidelines
- Addresses an OCS species – sage grouse
- Does not have a letter of support

A motion was made and seconded to approve the requested funding. The motion was approved. After the vote Tim explained that the approved funds for this project will be counted towards the required private match for the Oregon Conservation and Recreation fund (a legislatively approved fund that will allocate \$1 million dollars in General Fund monies if \$1 million dollars in private match donations are received).

### **Vote by Email Project Approvals**

Dave reviewed the vote by email projects approved since our last committee meeting in September 2020. These included Lewis Creek Watershed, Sandy River Delta Oaks, Fish Passage on Mill Creek and the Adopt-a-Lek program. He asked if committee members had any questions about these projects.

### **Clackamas River Project**

Garth provided an update on the Clackamas Project. The wood structures have withstood several significant high-water events and are recruiting additional wood. After the water receded, Garth was able to see a significant number of late run Coho redds. Garth will be presenting a paper on the Clackamas Project at an upcoming American Fisheries meeting.

### **Review of Oregon Wildlife Foundation Projects**

Tim provided an update on a number of ongoing Oregon Wildlife projects, including the Eagle Fern/North Fork Eagle Creek dam removals, Camp Creek Large Wood Enhancement project



(Molalla River), the Watch for Wildlife license plate campaign, the Wallowa Mountains wolverine Survey, the Gilchrist Wildlife Underpass Project, the Seeley Creek Large Wood Enhancement project (North Fork Alsea River), the Metolius Winter Range Habitat Restoration project, the Urban Wildlife Information Network (UWIN), the Greater Williams Prairie Restoration project, and our Fiscal Sponsorship Program.

**Fiscal Sponsorship for Carcajou Carnivore Conservation**

Tim explained that the researchers we have been funding for the Wallowa Mountains wolverine survey are forming a nonprofit dedicated to research on forest carnivores and have requested fiscal sponsorship from OWF. A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the Oregon Wildlife Foundation Board that they approve fiscal sponsorship of Carcajou Carnivore Conservation. The motion was approved.

**Grant Portal Development**

Nicole gave us an update on staff's development of an online grant portal using submit.com. Once our grant application process is online, it is anticipated our workload (receiving applications, verifying information, and packaging for distribution) will be reduced. Project applications will still be uploaded to the Project Committee area on our website for review although committee members will also have an option to log into our portal to review project applications if they'd like to do that.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 PM.