

## **PROJECT COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES**

### **FEBRUARY 29, 2024**

#### **24-02 Provolt Pond Turtle Project**

-Meets Guidelines? Yes

-Match Requirement? Yes, \$11,125 from BLM; \$5000 from Watchable Wildlife Foundation, plus OCRF and ODFW

-OCS Species or Habitat? Yes

-Letters of Support? Yes, ODFW

#### Summary:

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is requesting \$4,981 for the Provolt Pond Turtle Project. The northwestern pond turtle (NWPT) is a semi-aquatic reptile occurring in pond and stream habitats of southwestern Oregon. Given concerns over declining population trends in portions of its Oregon range, management actions are needed to address threats to persistence and to support habitats that sustain NWPT populations. This project proposes research and monitoring efforts that will quantify habitat use of NWPT at a recreational facility (Provolt Seed Orchard Special Recreation Management Area) in Josephine County, Oregon. In partnership with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) will deploy VHF transmitters on up to 12 adult turtles, and will monitor turtle movements and document observation locations for up to 15 months from spring of 2024 through summer of 2025. Resulting observational data will be used to identify critical NWPT habitat such as nesting or overwintering areas, to monitor turtle use of planning areas, to better understand the status of this important population of NWPT, and to update site management plans to ensure long-term compatibility of conservation and public use goals at this recreational site.

Approved for Funding: Yes      No

#### **24-03 Clear/SF Clear Creeks and Lower North Fork Large Wood and Fish Passage Restoration Project**

Meets Guidelines? Yes

Match Requirement? Only Pending (Private Forest Accord Mitigation Fund: \$300,629 pending) or In-Kind (Weyerhaeuser Company \$99,200 and ODFW \$7,500)

OCS Species or Habitat? Yes

Letters of Support? No

#### Summary:

The Upper Nehalem Watershed Council and ODFW are requesting \$115,000 for the Clear/SF Clear Creeks and Lower North Fork Large Wood and Fish Passage Restoration Project. The Clear/SF Clear Creeks and Lower North Fork Large Wood and Fish Passage Restoration Project aims to address habitat degradation and fish passage barriers in the Nehalem River watershed. This restoration effort targets enhancing habitat for various salmonid species, particularly ESA threatened Oregon Coast Coho ESU, by replacing undersized culverts with larger ones to facilitate fish passage and installing large wood structures to improve instream habitat complexity. The project, guided by the Nehalem Basin Partnership and supported by various stakeholders, aligns with conservation and recovery plans to restore ecological health while sustaining local economies. Upon completion, the project will provide significant upstream access for Coho salmon and enhance habitat for other species, covering approximately 1 mile of prioritized anchor habitat.

Approved for Funding: Yes      No

#### **24-04 North Bank Road Oak Restoration Project**

Meets Guidelines? Yes

Match Requirement? Yes - \$9,000 from Natural Resources Conservation Service

OCS Species or Habitat? Yes

Letters of Support? Yes, from Yew Creek Land Alliance

#### Summary:

Umpqua Watersheds and Janice Reid are requesting \$3,000 for the North Bank Road Oak Restoration Project. The North Bank Rd Oak Restoration Project is designed to restore native oak communities without severely disrupting the biotic communities in the short term. The property is 2 miles from a federal white-tailed deer management area managed by the Bureau of Land Management. White-tailed deer habitat and fire reduction are the focus of this 3-year project designed to remove competing vegetation while maintaining native habitats and structures in the landscape. The plan is to conduct the restoration with consideration of other native wildlife by retaining structures that benefit wildlife while reducing the risk of fire. Where other hardwood and conifer compete with, or soon will compete with, large native oaks, the plan will reduce competition by removing the competing species where the landowner can safely conduct it. Any competing species under 10 inches can be safely removed to eliminate competition with native oaks. The plan will favor wildlife and reduce fire danger by focusing on retaining larger oak, encouraging oak seedlings in places where oak are absent, and retaining snags. Blackberry, hawthorn, and other invasive shrubs will be removed to provide a more natural setting in the landscape. Where extensive, poison oak will be cut to reduce competition with native oak.

Approved for Funding: Yes      No

## **24-05 Riparian Restoration at Collier Memorial Park**

Meets Guidelines? Yes

Match Requirement? Yes, \$4620 from Think Wild, \$1420 from Oregon parks

OCS Species or Habitat? Yes

Letters of Support? Yes, from Oregon Parks and Recreation

Summary:

Think Wild, a wildlife center in Bend, Oregon, is requesting \$5,000 for riparian restoration at Collier Memorial Park. Think Wild runs Beaver Works Oregon to restore beaver habitats and promote wildlife recovery. Beaver populations face challenges due to environmental issues like wildfires and invasive species. Beaver activity enhances habitat for various species and improves resilience to drought and floods. Beaver Works Oregon focuses on riparian habitat restoration, outreach, and conflict mitigation to support beavers' success. They partner with agencies and landholders to conduct restoration projects and educate the community. The requested funding will help restore beaver habitat in Collier Memorial State Park, addressing factors limiting beaver repopulation after a wildfire. This project aligns with Oregon Conservation Strategy priorities and engages volunteers in habitat restoration. Collaboration between organizations and disciplines is crucial for successful conservation efforts amidst the climate crisis. Funding for interdisciplinary projects is essential for long-term ecosystem health and community resilience.

Approved for Funding: Yes      No

## **24-06 Harney County Dark Skies Conservation Program**

Meets Guidelines? Yes

Match Requirement? Yes, \$2,500 Roundhouse Foundation, \$10,000 Bird Alliance of Oregon

OCS Species or Habitat? Yes

Letters of Support? Yes, Harney County Library

Summary:

The Bird Alliance of Oregon is requesting \$5,000 for the Harney County Dark Skies Conservation Program project. The Bird Alliance of Oregon, formerly Portland Audubon, has a long-standing commitment to wildlife and environmental advocacy. With over 12,000 members and hundreds of volunteers, they run various programs promoting conservation, education, rehabilitation, and sanctuary stewardship. Recognizing the importance of dark skies for bird migration and ecosystem health, they propose a Dark Skies pilot program in Harney County, Oregon. This program aims to engage families in educational workshops and hands-on activities to foster appreciation for birds and stars while addressing light pollution issues. The project targets a

diverse audience, including local youth and families, with a focus on community engagement and ecological education. They seek funding to support startup program expenses, including food, materials, outreach, and consultant fees. Success will be measured by workshop attendance and participant feedback, with recognition offered to supporting organizations.

Approved for Funding: Yes      No

### **24-07 East Moraine Community Forest Accessibility**

Meets Guidelines? Yes

Match Requirement? Yes \$10,000 from Wallowa County

OCS Species or Habitat? Yes

Letters of Support? Yes, Wallowa Resources, Bio-Resources, Inc., Wallowa County Natural Resources and Economic Development

Summary:

The Wallowa Land Trust is requesting \$10,000 for the East Moraine Community Forest Accessibility project. The Wallowa Land Trust seeks funding for the installation of vault toilets at the East Moraine Community Forest (EMCF) in Wallowa County, Oregon. This project aims to address increased recreational use of the area while protecting its fragile ecosystem. The EMCF, a significant habitat for various wildlife species, was acquired in 2020 to prevent development and is now managed as a community forest. The installation of vault toilets will meet the growing demand for recreational facilities while minimizing the environmental impact of human activity. This initiative aligns with state outdoor recreation priorities and conservation strategies by enhancing inclusive access to natural landscapes while promoting responsible stewardship. Ongoing monitoring and maintenance will ensure the sustainable management of the EMCF for future generations.

Approved for Funding: Yes      No

### **24-08 Education & Naturalist Events in the Slough**

Meets Guidelines? Yes

Match Requirement? Almost: \$3,376.75 from EMSWCD and In-Kind \$1,263.84 from CSWC

OCS Species or Habitat? Yes

Letters of Support? No

Summary:

The Columbia Slough Watershed Council (CSWC) is requesting \$5,000 for their Education and Naturalist Events in the Slough project. CSWC focuses on protecting and enhancing the

Columbia Slough through community engagement, education, and restoration efforts. Their programming, viewed through a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) lens, includes various free events like paddles, birding walks, and cleanups, aimed at breaking down barriers to outdoor activities. In 2023, they added LGBTQIA2S+ and BIPOC-specific events, engaging hundreds of participants. They now seek funding for community-specific naturalist events and trash cleanups, led by facilitators representing diverse backgrounds, to promote education, stewardship, and pollution prevention in the watershed. These events provide safe spaces for marginalized groups, foster community connections, and encourage advocacy for natural spaces.

Approved for Funding: Yes      No

## **24-09 Monitoring Tufted Puffin Diets in Oregon**

Meets Guidelines? Yes

Match Requirement? Yes, but all is pending

OCS Species or Habitat? Yes

Letters of Support? Yes, Audubon Society Seabird Institute

### Summary:

Oregon State University is requesting \$2,000 for the Monitoring Tufted Puffin Diets in Oregon project. One of the major hurdles to increasing our ecological knowledge of coastal birds in Oregon is a lack of specific diet information and how this varies over time. This is particularly relevant for the emblematic tufted puffin. The advent of digital cameras and associated technological advances have improved the capacity of photographers to capture elusive animals in motion. Tufted Puffins fly into Haystack Rock in Cannon Beach, Oregon carrying bill loads of prey and are a challenging photographic subject. A successful data collection effort is contingent on the patience and dedication of the observer. In 2024, we are requesting funding support to continue our annual bill load photography effort to monitor diets of Tufted Puffins in Oregon. This will mark the 3rd summer of data collection using the camera equipment supported by Oregon Wildlife Foundation.

Approved for Funding: Yes      No