



OREGON
WATERSHED
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

2019 Annual Tribal Report

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
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Agency Overview

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Tribal Liaison

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The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) is a state agency with statutory authority to administer constitutionally dedicated funds for the purpose of protecting and enhancing Oregon’s watersheds and native fish and wildlife habitats. The responsibilities of the agency include:

- Managing a grant program for watershed protection and enhancement;
- Assisting in the development and implementation of watershed-scale restoration efforts; and
- Coordinating and supporting local infrastructure throughout the state to achieve voluntary cooperative conservation outcomes.

OWEB works with the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon on a government-to-government basis to address watershed scale restoration needs. OWEB operates grant programs to fund a variety of watershed management, protection, and restoration projects that the tribes leverage to meet their natural and cultural resource restoration goals and objectives.

OWEB is led by an 18-member policy oversight and decision-making board. Board members represent the public at large, federally recognized tribes, five state natural resource agency boards and commissions, Oregon State University Extension Service, and six federal land management and natural resource agencies. The agency provides grants and services to citizen groups, organizations, and agencies working to restore healthy watersheds in Oregon. OWEB actions support the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds, created in 1997. Funding comes from the Oregon Lottery as a result of citizen initiatives in 1998 and 2010, sales of salmon license plates since 1997, federal salmon recovery funds, and other sources.

Tribal Policy

In 2018, OWEB completed its process and revised its tribal policy with LCIS and tribal input. In 2019, OWEB’s tribal liaison and director continued to work together to communicate the intent of OWEB’s Tribal Policy and how staff can work effectively with tribes.

Summary of Programs and Process for Involving Tribes

OWEB works closely with tribes and involves them in programs and decision-making processes at all levels of the organization. The following sections describe the agency's interactions during 2019 with the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon and the Nez Perce Tribe that occupies lands in Idaho and Oregon.

OWEB Board and Grant Programs Tribal Participation

Board Membership

The Governor appoints a tribal representative as a voting member of the OWEB Board. The position currently is occupied by Jason Robison, Natural Resources Director of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

The tribal representative helps identify opportunities for collaboration and ensures the OWEB board and staff is aware of their responsibilities to involve and consider tribal interests. Robison is fully engaged in this process and actively participates on the board's focused investments and monitoring subcommittees.

Grant Program



Photo 1. Jonesboro wetland, Burns Paiute Tribe's wildlife mitigation site.

Grant Applicants

OWEB grants are available to a broad range of entities, including tribes [ORS 541.375(1)]. In addition to eligibility on their own, tribes are often members of local watershed councils. Oregon statute describing watershed councils (ORS 541.388) specifically identifies "federally recognized Indian Tribes" as potential members of local watershed councils. Tribes are a critical partner in watershed restoration in Oregon and often contribute vital match funds to grants that watershed councils and SWCDs receive. OWEB records show that in 2019 there were 29 completed grants that included tribal contributions. **Across all grant programs, tribes provided \$1,218,815 in cash and \$144,476 of in-kind support to OWEB grants in 2019.**

Small Grant Program

In OWEB's Small Grant program (OAR Chapter 695, Division 35), tribes are eligible to be members of Small Grant Teams in each of the state's 28 Small Grant areas. These Small Grant Teams award grants up to \$15,000 for watershed restoration projects. Other team members include watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts. In 2019, staff reached out to each tribe to identify small grant areas in which they would be eligible to participate. Tribes were invited to participate in the small grant areas with reservation, tribal, ceded lands, or usual and accustom areas located partially or entirely within the team's area. For the teams that have reorganized to date, representatives of all nine federal recognized tribes in Oregon serve on 15 of the 28 Small Grants Teams. We anticipate this number to increase once all teams have submitted their paperwork. The Grand Ronde Tribe was awarded a small grant in 2019 for \$15,000 to support riparian hardwood restoration efforts.

Regular Grant Program

OWEB solicits grant applications twice a year through the Regular Grant Program. During 2019, five grants totaling approximately \$720,000 were awarded to tribes: one grant totaling \$45,110 to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, three grants totaling \$440,698 to the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and one grant totaling \$235,097 to the Nez Perce Tribe. Tribal agencies have also submitted three applications in the most recent grant cycle, for which awards have not yet been made. **Since 2006, OWEB has awarded just over \$7,500,000 in grants to tribal governments.**

OWEB's Regional Program Representatives (RPRs) have regular contact with appropriate tribal staff. They meet with interested tribes prior to grant application submission and throughout the life of each grant to ensure OWEB works with tribes to meet goals and objectives. In addition, tribes often partner with watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) by helping manage the projects and at times receive funding to implement projects.

Regular Grant Program – Regional Review Teams

Applications received through OWEB's Regular Grant Program are reviewed by one of six Regional Review Teams, comprised of state, federal, and tribal natural resource professionals. All six regional review teams have at least one tribal natural resource professional participating in the review process. In 2019, seven tribal agency representatives participated on OWEB Regional Review Teams, including representatives from the Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.



Photo 2. Floodplain interaction at site of river restoration along the Middle Fork John Day River

Land Acquisition Grant Program

OWEB's land acquisition grant program provides funding for projects that acquire an interest in land from a willing seller to address the conservation needs of priority habitat and species. OWEB notifies all tribes after a land acquisition application is received to solicit input in the decision-making process. In addition, OWEB notifies tribes once a recommendation has been made allowing tribes to provide additional input prior to the OWEB Board's funding decision.

Water Acquisition Grant Program

OWEB's water acquisition grant program provides funding for programs or projects that acquire an interest or interests in water from a willing seller for the purpose of increasing instream flow. Similar to the land acquisition grant program, OWEB notifies tribes after a water acquisition grant application is received and once a recommendations has been made to allow multiple opportunities to provide input in the decision making process. In 2019, a \$36,579 water acquisition grant was awarded to Trout Unlimited to implement a pilot instream leasing project in the South Umpqua River on ranch lands owned by the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians. This innovative project will build capacity in an effort to expand the Umpqua Basin Flow Restoration Program in the future.

Focused Investment Partnership Program

In 2019, tribes continued to participate in the Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) Program. The OWEB Board made the initial awards in the program in 2016. Implementation funding provides opportunities for tribes and others to work collaboratively in partnerships on ambitious, long-term, and landscape-scale programmatic restoration initiatives aimed at creating measurable outcomes within priority areas that were identified by the OWEB Board.

OWEB invested in five new Implementation FIPs in 2019. Among these, the Clackamas Partnership includes the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs; and the John Day Basin Partnership includes the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, and the Burns Paiute Tribe. The technical review team for the John Day Basin Partnership FIP includes representatives from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

Two of the Implementation FIP partnerships also include Lomakatsi Restoration. While not a tribal government agency, this non-profit organization is heavily involved in applying Traditional Ecological



Photo 3. Before (top) and after aerial photos of stream restoration actions in Dry Creek, tributary to the Grande Ronde River

Knowledge and providing employment and technical training for tribal members working on watershed restoration projects.

In 2019, the OWEB Board approved a new grant program, which evolved from the previously offered Development FIP grant program. The new Partnership Technical Assistance grants offer two tracks: 1) Partnership Development to produce or enhance a Strategic Action Plan and governance documents, and 2) Partnership Capacity to support strategic action plan coordination and implementation. Partnership Technical Assistance applications were received in October 2019 and several included tribes as core partners. These applications will be reviewed and awarded later in 2020.

Telling the Restoration Story

Telling the Restoration Story is a targeted grant offering that helps OWEB and grantees better communicate outcomes from restoration work. These grants support compilation, analysis, and/or interpretation of existing data from a watershed restoration project, and production of outreach materials that describe outcomes. Seven projects received OWEB funds to complete outreach products in 2019, and new projects are currently being identified. In addition, the Confederate Tribes of Umatilla Reservation (CTUIR) completed an online story map to highlight outcomes associated with floodplain restoration in Meacham Creek. CTUIR did not use OWEB funding to complete this story, but OWEB staff provided feedback in a similar manner to other projects within this new offering. This information was shared with OWEB staff and Board members and is key to learning about the ecological outcomes that emerged from the restoration efforts in Meacham Creek, for which OWEB contributed grant funds.



Photo 4. Site of future restoration actions in the floodplain of Meacham Creek

Other Grant Program Involvements

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs continues to be a key participant in the Upper Middle Fork John Day River Intensively Monitored Watershed and received additional funding this year to continue their important work in this long-term restoration monitoring effort.

OWEB staff participates on the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs' John Day restoration review team, which allocates Bonneville Power Administration funding for watershed restoration projects designed to improve salmon habitat.

OWEB staff also participates in the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program (WWMP). The WWMP is the result of the State's 2010 agreement with Bonneville Power Administration for mitigation for the loss of fish and wildlife habitat due to the construction of 13 dams and reservoirs on major tributaries to the Willamette River from 1946-1964. Members

from Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community, and Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians participate in the WWMP, as they all have historic hunting, fishing, and trading areas in the Basin.

Promotion of Communication between OWEB and Tribes

Tribal Liaison

In conformance with OWEB's tribal policy, OWEB designated a staff person, Ken Fetcho, to operate as a tribal liaison for the agency. The tribal liaison is responsible for ensuring that OWEB's programs and policy development adheres to our tribal policy. This includes coordinating program and policy notices to tribal natural resource key contacts and providing training to staff as appropriate.

In 2019, OWEB's tribal liaison continued to emphasize the importance of OWEB's tribal policy to new employees and board members. Starting in 2019, each new employee and board member is briefed on the tribal policy and receives a copy of the current Annual Tribal Report. In May, the tribal liaison presented the 2018 Annual Tribal Report to OWEB staff to highlight its content and brainstorm improvements for the 2019 Report. These improvements, including the amount of tribal contributions to OWEB grants, was incorporated into this report.

In addition, the tribal liaison worked with Board Tribal Representative Jason Robison to provide a tribal training at OWEB's All-Staff Meeting in August 2019. Jesse Plueard and Kelly Coates, both tribal members and employees at Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, taught staff about the tribe's history and government structure. They highlighted their cultural and natural resource issues. This training was extremely valuable to help OWEB staff learn more about tribal history and culture.

Oregon Water Vision

OWEB has been assisting the Governor's Natural Resources Office (GNRO) in communicating with tribes related to Oregon's 100-year Water Vision to prepare a secure, safe, and resilient water future for all Oregonians. Tribes were invited to attend community water conversations that were held across the state to start the meetings with a tribal welcome and invocation. Four tribes accepted the invitation, and the introduction added to the richness of the meetings. OWEB coordinated with the GNRO to invite tribes to participate in individual water vision meetings to provide feedback regarding the importance of water and the unique connections each tribe has with water and water infrastructure. Scheduling for these meetings is still in process.

Training and Technical Support for Grantees

In 2019, OWEB continued to increase the involvement of tribes in grant programs and in agency policy development. The following is a summary:

1. In March and August 2019, OWEB's fiscal and grant program staff provided in-person training to assist CTWS and CTUIR in administering OWEB grants.

2. OWEB continues to provide additional funding to Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) technicians to help them hire licensed archeologists to perform cultural resources surveys during the planning process and monitoring when implementing CREP contracts on private property, if required.
3. OWEB is providing funding to send 10 CREP technicians to attend the State Parks Archeology training in April 2020 to learn more about this regulatory process, and to identify and protect cultural resources before implementing contracts.

Cultural Resources Protection Permits

OWEB continues to emphasize to grantees and grant project managers the importance of complying with regulations to protect cultural resources. OWEB grants pays for expenses to comply with cultural resource regulations to legally implement watershed improvement projects.

Annual Tribal Summit and Tribal Work Groups

OWEB's Executive Director and tribal liaison attended the Annual Tribal Summit and training hosted by the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation on December 2 and 3 to engage and listen to tribal representatives to understand the issues that are important to them. The tribal liaison also attended the Tribal Natural Resources Workgroup meetings in 2019 to share information and to better understand key initiatives tribes and state natural resource agencies are working on that may be relevant to each other. OWEB presented an important topic at the November 2019 meeting to seek tribal input on updating OWEB's ecological priorities in the Focused Investment Partnership Grant Program.

Administrative Rules

In 2019, OWEB provided information to tribes to request comments on two occasions for administrative rulemaking. The OWEB Board adopted rules for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program in 2019, and a representative of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians participated on the Commission, which also served as the Rulemaking Advisory Committee.

OWEB is also currently engaged in rulemaking for both the Water Acquisitions and Monitoring Grant programs, and representatives from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation are participating on these Rulemaking Advisory Committees, with the expectation that the OWEB Board will adopt these rules in 2020.

Meetings with Tribes

OWEB staff met in person with tribes at their local offices in 2019 to improve relations and better understand their short- and long-term goals and objectives related to watershed monitoring and restoration.

The South Coast's Regional Program Representative, Mark Grenbemer, attended an all-day meeting hosted by the Coos Watershed Association (CoosWA) with representatives from the Coquille Indian Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, state and federal agency representatives, and industrial timber stakeholders to seek technical

input and determine project ripeness. Both of these tribes have representatives on the CoosWA Board and attend the watershed council's executive team meetings.

The OWEB Executive Director attended a meeting with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs to better understand their water infrastructure challenges.

On November 7, Katie Duzik, OWEB's North Coast Regional Program Representative attended the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians Tribal Summit in Florence. This all-day event had multiple speakers and events to share their history and heritage to improve relations with their tribe and state agencies.

Tribal Cultural Items Survey

In 2019 OWEB's tribal liaison engaged in a comprehensive effort to identify tribal cultural items that they may possess. This effort included attending the all-day training the Task Force hosted in Salem and interviewing staff to identify items located in field offices outside of Salem. The initial report was provided to tribal leaders and cultural resources staff for review.

It is through these interactions that relations are developed and trust is built. OWEB looks forward to fostering these relationships in 2020 and in the years to come.



Photo 5. Cow parsnip bed and harvest of seed at Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde in 2017. Photos by Peter Moore and Jeremy Ojua.



Photo 6. Proud harvester showing camas bulbs in the Willamette Valley.

