



OREGON
WATERSHED
ENHANCEMENT BOARD

2022
Annual Tribal Report



Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
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Agency Overview

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The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) is a state agency that administers grants to organizations for voluntary conservation actions. Grant-funded projects improve overall watershed health and provide on-the-ground habitat restoration and conservation across the state. Agency responsibilities include:

- Grant management and administration for watershed protection and enhancement; and
- Assistance in the development and implementation of watershed-scale restoration initiatives; and
- Coordination and support for locally-led initiatives throughout the state to achieve voluntary cooperative conservation outcomes.

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.

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

Tribal Policy

In 2018, OWEB revised its tribal policy by working with the Legislative Commission on Indian Services (LCIS) and tribal input. In 2022, OWEB’s leadership and tribal liaison continued to work together to communicate the intent of OWEB’s Tribal Policy and identify opportunities for staff to 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 2022 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 is currently occupied by Kelly Coates, Natural Resources Program Director of the Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

Additionally, Governor Brown nominated Lindsay McClary to fill a recently opened at-large position. Lindsay is the Restoration Ecologist/Fish & Wildlife Policy Analyst for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, and her term began on March 1, 2022, following Senate confirmation. We are extremely grateful to have two bright and energetic tribal professionals participating on the OWEB Board. Kelly and Lindsay help identify opportunities for collaboration and ensure the OWEB board and staff are aware of their responsibilities to involve and consider tribal interests.



▲ Photo 1 (left). Jeremy Ojua with Pacific Willow at the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde native nursery. Photo 2 (right). Prescribed burn at Herbert Farm and Natural Area.

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP)

OAHP was established by the Oregon legislature in 2017 to provide voluntary incentives to farmers and ranchers to support practices that maintain or enhance agriculture and fish, wildlife, or other natural resources on agricultural lands. The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (commission) oversees the program and makes funding and policy recommendations to the OWEB Board. The commission consists of 12 members who are appointed by the OWEB Board, including one member selected by the OWEB Board who is a representative of tribal interests. This position is filled by Nathan Jackson, who is a rancher and manages the K Bar Ranches Corporation for the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua

Tribe of Indians. Nathan is also an enrolled tribal member of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

Tribes are recognized as eligible applicants for all OAHP grant programs. OAHP received \$5 million in funding during the 2022 legislative session to increase the economic viability of Oregon’s agricultural operations, reduce the fragmentation of working lands, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, and other natural resources. The commission has met numerous times throughout 2022 to further develop this Program and prepare for its first grant offering. Applications were received in October 2022 and grants awards are anticipated in the spring of 2023. Additionally, OWEB performed outreach with the federally recognized tribes in Oregon to recruit applicants for a vacant commission seat to represent natural resource interests.



▲ Photo 3. Vegetation monitoring transect performed by the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians as an in-kind match contribution to a water acquisition grant with Trout Unlimited

Grant Program

Grant Applicants

OWEB grants are available to a broad range of entities, including tribes [ORS 541.375(1)]. **Since 2006, OWEB has awarded just over \$11,030,000 in grants to tribal governments.** Across all grant programs, OWEB provided \$1,689,730 to tribes in 2022. In addition to eligibility on their own, tribes are often members of, or partners with, local watershed councils. Oregon law describing watershed councils (ORS 541.388) specifically identifies

“federally recognized Indian Tribes” as potential members of these local organizations. Tribes are critical partners in watershed restoration in Oregon and often contribute vital match funds to grant projects. In 2022, 18 completed grants included tribal contributions. **Across all grant programs, tribes provided \$1,043,828 in cash and \$60,661 of in-kind support to OWEB grants in 2022.**

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 have access to \$100,000 per biennium to recommend grants of up to \$15,000 for watershed restoration projects. Other team members include watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts. All Small Grant Teams have reorganized the composition of their Teams for the 2021-2023 biennium. Representatives of all nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon and the Nez Perce Tribe serve on 21 of the 28 Small Grants Teams. This number has increased from 20 to 21 over the last biennium, likely due to the increased outreach OWEB completed in 2019. Some tribes sit on several Small Grant Teams and some Teams have more than one tribe participating together.

Open Solicitation Grant Program

OWEB solicits grant applications twice a year through the Open Solicitation Grant Program also known as the Regular Grant Program. During 2022, three grants totaling \$581,967 were awarded to tribes (two grants totaling \$366,490 to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and one grant in the amount of \$215,477 to the Nez Perce Tribe). Tribal agencies have also submitted two applications in the most recent grant cycle, for which awards have not yet been made.

OWEB’s Regional Program Representatives (RPRs) have regular contact with appropriate tribal staff. They meet with interested tribes before grant application submission and throughout the life of each grant to ensure tribes can meet their goals and objectives. 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 as contractors. In 2022, approximately 19% of the applications that were submitted had tribal participation. Tribes participate in applications in several ways. They may be applicants, provide cash matches, landowners, contractors for project implementation, partners, board members of the applicant’s organization, or supporters of the applicant (such as writing letters of support). In 2022, applications with tribal participation have a 74% success rate (are funded) compared to applications without tribal participation which have a 63% success rate.

Open Solicitation Grant Program – Regional Review Teams

Applications received through OWEB’s Open Solicitation 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 2022, seven tribal agency representatives participated in 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.

Land Acquisition Grant Program

OWEB's land acquisition grant program provides funding for projects that acquire interests in land from a willing seller to address the conservation needs of priority habitats and species. OWEB notifies all tribes after receiving a land acquisition application to solicit input in the decision-making process. Additionally, OWEB notifies tribes once a recommendation has been made allowing tribes to provide additional input before 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 in water from a willing seller to increase instream flow. Like the land acquisition grant program, OWEB notifies tribes after a water acquisition grant application is received and once a recommendation has been made to allow multiple opportunities to provide input in the decision-making process.



▲ Photos 4. Before and after photos from the Longley Meadows Fish Habitat Enhancement Project, implemented by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

Focused Investment Partnership Program

In 2022, tribes continued to participate in the Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) Program. The OWEB Board made the initial FIP awards in 2016. Implementation funding provides opportunities for tribes and others to work collaboratively on long-term, landscape-scale programmatic restoration initiatives. These initiatives create measurable outcomes within priority areas that were identified by the OWEB Board.

OWEB invested in five new FIP Initiatives in 2022.

- East Cascades Oak Partnership includes the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs

- Coos Basin Coho Partnership includes the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians and the Coquille Indian Tribe
- Siuslaw Coho Partnership includes the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians
- Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative includes the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians.
- Klamath Siskiyou Oak Partnership works closely with the Inter-Tribal Ecosystem Restoration Partnership (ITERP). ITERP is a collaboration of regional tribes, tribal community leaders, federal and state agencies, and non-profit conservation organizations throughout Oregon and northern California that is operated by the Lomakatsi Restoration Project.

The FIP Program is another great opportunity for tribes to pursue and receive grant funding from OWEB. In 2022, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs received a grant for \$400,000 and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation received a grant for just over \$680,000, both through the existing John Day Basin FIP.

Focused Investment Partnership Technical Assistance Program

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.
- 2) Partnership Capacity to support strategic action plan coordination and implementation.

Partnership Technical Assistance applications were received in October 2021 and were awarded by the OWEB Board in 2022. Two of these funded partnerships include tribes as partners.

- East Cascades Oak Partnership includes the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs.
- Coquille Coho Partnership includes the Coquille Indian Tribe.

Post-Wildfire Immediate Response and Recovery Grant Program

At the July 2021 OWEB meeting, the board approved an allocation of \$300,000 for wildfire recovery immediate response grants under the Governor's Priorities line item in the 2021-2023 OWEB spending plan. Building upon OWEB's experiences in 2020, these limited grant offerings respond to short-term gaps in wildfire recovery funding. Two of the four fire areas were awarded grants to one lead entity that works in cooperation with area partners. Partners in the Skyline Ridge and Elbow Creek fire areas did not pursue a grant. The Cougar Peak Fire area was awarded \$49,876 and the Bootleg Fire area was awarded \$75,000 to fund short-term, high-priority needs for a limited set of implementation, technical assistance, and stakeholder engagement activities.

Ongoing efforts to provide funding to the 2020 wildfire areas were expanded. Part of House Bill 5006 (2021) provided OWEB with a total of \$19.75 million in funding for grants to support natural resource recovery in areas impacted during the 2020 fire season. Funding was intended to support on-the-ground implementation activities focused on upland and riparian replanting and floodplain restoration. Eligible applicants included tribes, among other entities. As of October 2022, seven projects have been funded for 6 of the 14 fire areas. Six additional projects are pending and will be funded following approved application revisions. While no tribes have submitted applications, they have partnered with applicants to help scope and implement the projects.

Additionally, during the 2022 Oregon Legislative Session, OWEB received a total of \$5 million in funding to provide grants to support natural resource recovery in areas impacted during the 2021 fire season. Funding was intended to support on-the-ground implementation activities focused on natural resource recovery in upland, riparian, and instream habitats. Eligible applicants include tribes, among other entities. The first cycle closed on October 20, 2022, and received three applications, two of which have tribal participation and will be reviewed for funding consideration in late fall 2022. Additional cycles may be possible in early 2023.

Drought Recovery Grant Program

Senate Bill (SB) 5561 passed during the December 13, 2021, special legislative session and allocated \$11.627 million in General Funds to OWEB for grant-making and program administration to address the ongoing impacts of the drought. As part of program development, OWEB staff participate in a monthly Klamath livestock water working group to find solutions that will provide stock water and improve streamside vegetation. The group is comprised of representatives from agencies and the Klamath Tribes. OWEB conducted extensive outreach with local partners, reaching out to over 45 different groups, including Tribes to assist in designing the following grant programs.

- \$3,000,000 for distribution to the Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to support stewardship practices on irrigated land that is at high risk for erosion and soil degradation, and to limit the proliferation of noxious and invasive weeds.
- \$3,000,000 to provide grants for livestock watering wells and construction of off-channel water facilities in Klamath County. Funding is provided to help defer the cost for irrigated pasture owners to move livestock watering facilities away from riparian areas, minimizing grazing impacts to riparian areas and the dependency on in-stream water sources.
- \$2,000,000 to North Unit Irrigation District (NUID) for matching grants to support investments in irrigation modernization projects within the NUID boundary in Jefferson County.
- \$1,627,000 to irrigation districts for matching grants to support statewide investments in irrigation modernization projects.

- \$1,000,000 to support drought resilience projects in Jefferson County. OWEB opened a targeted grant offering for Drought Resiliency Technical Assistance Projects in Jefferson County. In addition, OWEB is working with Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council to develop an interagency agreement to support coordination and technical support activities for the Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative.
- \$1,000,000 to support drought resilience projects in Klamath County. OWEB opened two grant offerings for Drought Resiliency Projects in Klamath County: one focuses on Technical Assistance and Stakeholder Engagement, and a second focuses on on-the-ground drought resilience actions.

Other Grant Program Involvements

The Upper Middle Fork John Day River Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) is a long-term, large-scale monitoring effort to evaluate watershed restoration projects. OWEB participates on the steering team and assists with securing funding for several aspects of the program. The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs continues to be a key participant in the Upper Middle Fork John Day River IMW and received \$19,000 in funding this year to continue their important work in this long-term watershed monitoring effort.

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 of 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, and Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians participate in the WWMP, as they all have historic hunting, fishing, and trading areas in the Basin.



▲ Photo 5. Middle Fork John Day River restoration work completed by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

Tribal Liaison

In conformance with OWEB's tribal policy, OWEB's designated staff person, Ken Fetcho, continues to operate as a tribal liaison for the agency. The tribal liaison is responsible for ensuring that OWEB's programs and policy development adhere 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 2022, 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.

The tribal liaison continued to meet with Calla Hagle, the Natural Resources Director of the Burns Paiute Tribe, to explore the potential for planning training for OWEB staff that would occur in the future. The purpose of the training would be to learn more about the Burns Paiute Tribe and learn how OWEB can be a better partner in areas of mutual interest. OWEB is interested in learning more about how the Burns Paiute Tribe government is structured, their cultural and natural resource priorities, and how that might influence how they pursue our funding. OWEB looks forward to scheduling this training in 2023.

The tribal liaison worked with Jennifer Karson-Engum to provide tribal training at OWEB's All-Staff Meeting in October 2022. Jennifer is a cultural anthropologist and ethnographer for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Jennifer's presentation taught staff about the Tribe's traditional areas of use that spread across the Western United States and how the importance of the cultural resources being integrated into the Natural Resources Department. She highlighted their efforts to document the traditional place names for wide geography in NE OR and SE Washington. This training was extremely valuable to help OWEB staff learn more about the importance of place names and the rich information they provide for the Tribes and the broader public.

At the July 2022 OWEB Board meeting in Enterprise, partners from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Nez Perce Tribe, ODFW, Wallowa Lake Irrigation District and OWRD presented and hosted a field tour of the Wallowa Lake dam rehabilitation and fish passage project. These partners came together to describe the efforts to rehabilitate the dam, provide fish passage, instream flows for fish, irrigation, drinking water, and flood control.



▲ Photo 6. Wallowa Lake Field Tour (left to right): Bobby Hills- Nez Perce Tribe, Courtney Warner-Crowell - Governor's Office, Jeff Yanke- ODFW, Dan Butterfield- Wallowa Lake Irrigation District, Gary James- CTUIR, Joe Dawson- Wallowa Lake Irrigation District, David Bates- OWRD.

Tribal Water Task Force

In September of 2021, the nine Sovereign Tribes of Oregon wrote Governor Brown addressing the state of Oregon's 100-year Water Vision. The letter shared tribal perspectives on water and noted the importance of tribal engagement in any water planning process. The letter continued by requesting the establishment of a Tribal Water Task Force, which would serve two primary functions:

1. Educate Oregon's nine Federally Recognized Tribes to the full complement of State agencies that touch upon 'water' and that have a bearing on one or more of Oregon's water resources.
2. Educate Oregon's nine water-related agencies on the full complement of Tribal interests/issues that 'Oregon's Water Vision' needs to acknowledge and address.

In response to the request, Governor Brown directed the OWRD along with members of her team to help organize and convene a Tribal Water Task Force (Task Force) to address the above topics. OWEB has participated in the six Task Force meetings that occurred during the summer and fall of 2022. OWEB presented at the July 13 Task Force meeting to describe its roles and responsibilities that are related to watershed enhancement and protection. In addition, OWEB provided a thorough review and comments on the draft report that is currently under development. We look forward to working with the Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon to implement the Task Force's recommendations that are proposed in this report.

Oregon Water Data Portal

In 2022, OWEB began to work with several other state agencies to scope and design the Oregon Water Data Portal (OWDP). This is a project funded by the Oregon Legislature to help improve access to statewide data and information to make water and water infrastructure decisions. OWEB, ODEQ, and OWRD provided a briefing at the Tribal Natural Resources Workgroup in October. The discussion touched upon mutual interests in water and water data gaps, as well as tribal data sharing and sovereignty. As a result of the conversation, efforts are underway to engage with tribes through a formal consultation letter. Tribes were also invited to two additional listening sessions to discuss the planning for the OWDP project: one session focused on interested parties, and a session tailored to water data users, practitioners, and managers. Each of these three meetings resulted in key information that is being used to inform long-term strategic water and water infrastructure-related decisions, with a report anticipated to be provided to the Legislature in early 2023.

Cultural Resources Protection

OWEB continues to emphasize the importance of grantees and grant project managers complying with regulations that protect cultural resources. OWEB grants pay for expenses to comply with cultural resource regulations and legally implement watershed improvement projects. In 2022, OWEB continued to work with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding programmatic agreements to address the potential effects that the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) grant program may have on cultural resources.

OWEB, NOAA, and their contractor hosted an informational webinar in March 2022. The webinar enabled tribal, state, and federal agencies to describe NOAA's plan to draft and execute a Programmatic Agreement (PA) for the PCSRF Grant Program to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act in Oregon. Additionally, OWEB, NOAA, and their contractor presented at the Cultural Resources Cluster in July 2022 to further describe the PA development process and receive input from the tribes. NOAA is working to provide a draft PA for tribal review in early 2023 and additional engagement will occur to ensure their feedback is incorporated into this important document.

Assessment of Grant Practices Impact on Tribes

In October 2021, OWEB partnered with a Portland State University graduate student on an assessment of how OWEB's granting practices impact federally recognized Tribes' ability to apply for and receive grant funding to meet their watershed enhancement goals and objectives.

Results from this assessment are summarized in a final report and are available online at: <https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/Documents/2021-Oct-ItemO-Tribal-Granting-Practices-Assessment-Report.pdf>

The findings in the report were developed directly from interviews conducted with staff from each of the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon, as well as the Nez Perce Tribe. Using these findings, the PSU student developed recommendations to address barriers identified through the assessment. In 2022, OWEB staff prioritized these recommendations and started implementing them. One of the high-priority recommendations involves providing training for tribes on aspects of OWEB's grantmaking and clearing up areas of confusion, so OWEB has started to plan this training for 2023.

Climate Resolution

In January 2022, OWEB's board adopted a [Climate Resolution \(OWEB Resolution 01-2022\)](#). The resolution states that OWEB will:

Integrate climate mitigation and adaptation in their budgeting, investing, and policy-making decisions by:

- Funding climate-smart adaptation and resilience for Oregon's watersheds, natural resources, people, and communities.
- Funding projects that include meaningful emissions reductions, carbon sequestration, and protection of carbon storage in enhancing watershed health and habitat restoration.
- Valuing project co-benefits and assessing the long-term sustainability of projects and acquisitions.
- Learn and apply diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and environmental justice principles when making funding decisions to address challenges arising from climate change to traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities.
- Engage traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities in processes to craft meaningful solutions that are integrated into funding decisions.

Following the adoption of the resolution, OWEB staff embarked on a tribal and stakeholder engagement process with the intent of learning from partners about the potential challenges and opportunities associated with incorporating mitigation, adaptation, and DEI evaluation criteria in grantmaking. The public engagement process included a virtual tribal listening session. All nine of the federally recognized tribes in Oregon were invited to attend. Representatives from eight of the nine tribes attended, with multiple representatives from each tribe in attendance in almost all cases. Feedback from the tribal engagement process will be used to inform considerations around rulemaking to include the climate and DEI evaluation criteria in all grant programs.

At the July 2022 board meeting, the OWEB board approved the agency to start the rulemaking process to add these criteria into its grantmaking rules. The agency successfully recruited Helena Linnell, Biological Planning and Operations Manager for the Coquille Indian Tribe, to participate in the Rulemaking Advisory Committee (RAC). The rulemaking process will include extensive ongoing tribal engagement and OWEB anticipates the process will take at least one year.

Annual Tribal Summit and Tribal Work Groups

Director Charpilloz Hanson and Liaison Fetcho attended the Annual Tribal Summit and evening reception in Florence on October 3 and 4 to engage and listen to tribal representatives to understand the issues that are important to them. The tribal liaison also continued to attend the State/Tribal Natural Resources Workgroup meetings in 2022.



▲ Photo 7. 2022 Annual Tribal Summit panel with Governor Kate Brown and tribal leaders, Florence, OR.

Meetings with Tribes

Director Charpilloz Hanson, Deputy Director Page, and Liaison Fetcho met with natural resource program leaders from each of the nine federally recognized tribes and the Nez Perce Tribe in 2022. These meetings aimed for OWEB's new leadership to introduce themselves and get to know the tribe's natural resource managers and establish a productive working relationship. These meetings were a great opportunity for OWEB to learn about the tribe's natural resource/fisheries priorities and how they might intersect with OWEB's grant opportunities and policy initiatives. We also described OWEB's current priority initiatives and learned how each tribe might be willing to engage in them. We hope that establishing these relationships and exchanging information is mutually beneficial so we can continue to foster and develop relations between OWEB and each federally recognized tribe in Oregon. OWEB looks forward to meeting with the tribes on their lands in 2023 to see some of their watershed enhancement projects and continue to learn more.