Oregon’s Access & Habitat Program

1999 - 2001 Biennium Report

Prepared by the Access & Habitat Board and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

February 2001
A message from Director Jim Greer

Private lands account for 51% of Oregon’s land base. These lands contain some of the most productive areas in the state, representing our farm and range lands, forests, stream corridors and wetlands. Their significance to Oregon’s communities, economy and our fish and wildlife resources cannot be overestimated.

As stewards of essential habitat, Oregon’s private landowners are key partners in fish and wildlife conservation strategies. Landowner incentive programs are an increasingly important means of encouraging landowner involvement in fish and wildlife conservation. By forging new partnerships and leveraging resources, private landowners have the financial and technical assistance needed to enhance habitat in ways that meet their operational needs.

Created in 1993 by the Oregon Legislature, the Access & Habitat Program has served as a model incentive program to improve fish and wildlife habitat and hunting access on Oregon’s private lands. We have conducted a number of excellent projects in 1999 and 2000, and plan for continued progress in 2001. The pages that follow testify to the program’s success in fostering partnerships between landowners, hunters and government agencies to benefit our state’s fish and wildlife.

As one of the nearly 300,000 hunters that annually contribute $2 to the Access & Habitat Program, I am proud to support the efforts of Oregon’s private landowners to ensure a future for our state’s wildlife and hunting heritage.
INTRODUCTION

In 1993, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2538, creating the Access and Habitat Program. The legislation was established to create an incentive-based program to improve fish and wildlife habitat and public hunting access on private lands in Oregon. The program was reauthorized by the legislature in 1997, extending its benefits to Oregon’s citizens and fish and wildlife resources through December 2003.

The convening of the 2001 Oregon Legislature marks the eighth year of the program’s existence and the opportunity to reflect on program accomplishments over the 1999-2001 biennium.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Access & Habitat Program’s motto, "Landowners & Hunters Together for Wildlife," conveys the program’s basic mission to foster partnerships between landowners and hunters for the benefit of the fish and wildlife they value. The program also seeks to recognize and encourage the important contributions made by landowners to the state’s fish and wildlife resources — stewardship that affects about 50 percent of Oregon’s land base.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

Funded by a $2 annual surcharge on hunting licenses and other sources derived from hunters, the Access & Habitat Program provides grants to private landowners, timber and agriculture corporations, sportsmen groups, natural resource agencies, and others for projects designed to improve wildlife habitat and/or increase public hunting access to private lands. Examples of eligible projects include wildlife forage seeding, water development, riparian protection, meadow fertilization, wetland restoration, regulated hunt programs, law enforcement patrol, travel management areas, hunting leases and land acquisition.

Anyone wishing to receive a grant must complete an application describing the project and its benefits to wildlife and/or provisions for public hunting opportunities, project location, cooperators, work schedules and funding commitments, including the grant amount requested from the Access & Habitat Board. Project proposals are reviewed first by the appropriate regional advisory council, which sends its recommendations to the board. Proposals are reviewed by the board and recommended projects are forwarded to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, the final decision-making body.
THE ACCESS & HABITAT BOARD

House Bill 2538 established a seven-member citizen board to provide oversight of the Access & Habitat Program. Appointed by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, the board consists of three members representing agriculture and timber landowner interests, three members representing hunter interests, and one member representing the general public, who also serves as chairperson. Their role is to review Access & Habitat project proposals and make formal recommendations for project funding to the Commission. By statute, the board is directed to recommend a mix of projects that balance habitat and access benefits statewide when reviewing grant proposals. Board members meet quarterly to review applications and conduct other program business.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Board chairman CHUCK SMITH is the Regional Manager for Timber Products Company in Medford. Appointed in December 1997, he served as chairman of the Southwest Region A&H Advisory Council from 1993-97. A hunter and outdoorsman, Chuck is an active volunteer with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and a member of several wildlife conservation organizations.

Vice chairman KELLY SMITH, a hunter representative and original alumnus member of the A&H Board, recently retired after 20 years as a research director and technical editor with Bend Research. Kelly has served many Oregon Hunters Association Bend Chapter officer posts and as the organization’s state president and chairman. He was recently appointed as elected chairman of The Mule Deer Foundation’s national board of directors. Kelly is an avid hunter and outdoorsman and active volunteer for ODFW’s Becoming an Outdoors Woman Program. Born and raised in Eugene, he lives on 100 acres near Bend.

THEO "Tik" MOORE, a rancher from Vale, serves as a landowner representative. Moore has been involved with the A&H Program as a member of its Southeast High Desert Advisory Council since its inception. Local ODFW biologists supported his appointment due to his long-time activism with youth deer and pheasant hunts and habitat restoration projects with the 4-H Outdoor Club. Moore is a member of the Malheur County Farm Bureau and Oregon Cattleman’s Association. He helped lobby the state legislature for the successful reauthorization of the A&H Program in 1997 and has been active in developing several A&H projects.

Landowner representative WARD S. ARMSTRONG was president and Executive Director of the Oregon Forest Industries Council from 1986-98. Before that, he worked for Weyerhaeuser as Oregon Public Affairs Manger and Director of Issues Management. He was instrumental in helping pass the original legislation creating the
A&H Program and believes strongly in fostering cooperative relationships between landowners and hunters.

Retired Oregon State Police fish and wildlife enforcement officer Bob Lund lives in LaGrande and represents hunter interests. He was active in ODFW’s Strategic Operational Planning Group in 1997 and is a state board member of the Oregon Hunters Association. He is active in a variety of conservation, habitat and hunting issues throughout Oregon.

Incoming landowner representative Tally Patton currently works as a forester for Boise Cascade Corporation. She has worked with various landowners as well as federal, state and local agencies. She is very active in hunting issues on private lands and serves on numerous committees that deal with animal damage, vegetation management, elk management, and Access & Habitat relations. She has a wildlife biology background that enables her to more effectively evaluate interactions between private landowners and wildlife.

Hunter representative Reinard Okeson is also a new member and brings an extensive knowledge of wildlife species, particularly waterfowl and upland birds. He is a retired Bureau of Land Management employee who specialized in land use and environmental impacts associated with wildlife species. He currently operates a cut-flower farm near Forest Grove. He has served as Regional Director of Ducks Unlimited as well as being active in Oregon Duck Hunters Association and Izaak Walton League.

Retiring Board Members

Hunter representative Monty Montgomery divides his time among a variety of conservation endeavors including chairmanship of the Izaak Walton League’s Public Lands Restoration Task Force and founding member of the A&H Board. He served on the A&H Board as its vice chairman for two years. A resident of Portland, Monty is a retired deputy director of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. He completed his second term as a Board member in December 2000.

A wheat grower and rancher from The Dalles, Jim Markman has a long history of public involvement including membership in the Oregon Farm Bureau, Wasco County economic development planning and his local school board. He completed his second term as a Board member in December 2000.

A&H Regional Advisory Councils

Six regional councils serve in an advisory capacity to the A&H Board. The councils provide the initial review of grant proposals and forward their recommendations to the A&H Board. Comprised of landowner, hunter and public volunteers, Council members bring grass roots expertise and local knowledge to the review process.

Regional Council Members

North Willamette Region

Chair
Dave Johnson
Kent Boring
Bill Perry
Kevin Van Dyke
Wendell Locke
Bill Bogh
Nicholas Berg

Landowner
Landowner
Landowner
Hunter
Hunter
Hunter

Forest Grove
Forest Grove
West Linn
Forest Grove
Gaston
Portland
Birkenfeld

South Willamette Region

Chair
David Wiley
Dave Riddell
Ron O’Neal
Michael Hicks
Jess Stalcup
Lonnie Woosley
Max Smith

Landowner
Landowner
Landowner
Hunter
Hunter
Hunter
Hunter

Salem
Monmouth
Veneta
Monmouth
Lebanon
Florence
Junction City
Revenue projected through June 2001; revenue may vary depending on actual hunting licenses sold.

1999-2001 PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

Access & Habitat revenues are used to fund approved project grants and administrative expenses, including one permanent statewide coordinator position. For the 1999-2001 biennium, program expenditures to date total $1,033,000. Projects approved during the remainder of the 99-01 biennium will be drawn from the "uncommitted" funds as shown in the following chart.

A&H PROJECT EXPENDITURES

The Access & Habitat legislation establishes eligibility for projects that provide habitat improvement benefits, hunting access benefits or a balance of both. In 1999-01, the Oregon Fish
and Wildlife Commission allocated 50 percent of A&H grant expenditures to projects providing both access and habitat benefits, 29 percent to access only projects and 21 percent to habitat improvement projects. Fully 79 percent of A&H grant funds were expended on projects offering hunting access benefits.

A&H PROJECT EXPENDITURES

- Access 29%
- Access & Habitat 50%
- Habitat 21%

The 24 projects approved from July 1, 1999 are located throughout the state, reflecting the general distribution of private lands in Oregon.

A&H project cooperators contributed a significant $3.6 million in matching funds towards 99-01 approved projects. In other words, for every A&H dollar spent, more than $3 of cooperator funds were contributed towards completion of approved projects.

A&H PROGRAM COOPERATOR CONTRIBUTIONS

- A&H Funds 22%
- Cooperator Matching Funds 78%

HUNTER ACCESS SUMMARY

Projects providing hunter access accounted for the vast majority of approved projects during the 99-01 biennium (79%). As a result, the program set new benchmarks for hunter opportunity and acreage open for public hunting.

There were 941,232 new acres of hunting opportunity in 1999 and 2,815,435 new acres in 2000. Hunting access was offered on private farms and ranches and extensive tracts of industrial forest lands. Sportsmen volunteers served as gatekeepers for private timber companies, keeping a watch over property and ensuring continued hunting privileges for the public. Regulated hunt areas were established on private ranch and grazing association lands in coordination with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. And one property was acquired to secure important wildlife habitat and recreational access for long-term public use and enjoy-
ment. On projects establishing travel management areas, the A&H Board carefully considered possible impacts to senior and disabled citizens, supporting project modifications that benefit these constituents and maintain landowner incentive to provide public access.

The majority of hunting opportunities on A&H project lands are for deer, elk, waterfowl and upland birds. Projects also offer access for other recreational pursuits including wildlife viewing, camping, hiking, fishing, mushrooming, horseback riding, photography and cross country skiing.

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT SUMMARY

The wide range of habitat improvement projects funded by A&H reflects the diversity of Oregon’s landscape. Just over 430,716 acres of private landholdings were improved to benefit wildlife, fish and watershed health. A sampling of the kinds of projects funded in 99-01 includes:

- wetland restoration
- riparian protective fencing
- nesting structures
- wildlife forage crop plantings
- tree and shrub cover plantings
- rangeland rehabilitation
- controlled burns
- pasture and meadow fertilization
- spring development
- erosion control
- juniper management
- grazing management fencing

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The 1997 Oregon Legislature authorized funding of the A&H Program through December 31, 2003. The A&H Board and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will continue to pursue the following strategies:

- Encourage the funding of projects that provide significant public recreation access to private lands and land-locked public lands.
- Encourage landowners to develop or enhance wildlife habitat.
- Encourage the participation of state watershed councils and other coordinated resource planning groups in the program.
- Facilitate cooperative programs that reduce wildlife depredation on private lands and minimize economic losses to landowners.
- Foster partnerships and leverage funding between landowners, hunters, ODFW and others for the benefit of the state’s fish and wildlife resources.

As Oregon’s human population grows, demand for recreation will exert an ever-increasing strain on our public lands and resources. The A&H Program can help offset this demand by offering increased public hunting opportunities on Oregon’s vast private landholdings, while providing landowner incentives to enhance fish and wildlife habitat. Under the capable guidance of the A&H Board and Regional Councils, the program will continue to serve Oregon’s hunters and land stewards in a partnership for wildlife conservation.
PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS

The A&H Program has funded 24 projects during the 99-01 biennium as of November 2000. Projects provide both hunting opportunity and wildlife habitat while fostering positive relationships between landowners, hunters and the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife. Here are some examples of recent projects:

Murderer’s Creek Winter Shrub Planting

During April 2000, 263 volunteers helped the Redmond Chapter of Oregon Hunters Association plant 20,000 native shrubs on 400 acres of the Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Area. Past land use and invasion of Medusahead rye decreased range quality. Area managers have used prescribed burns to control the rye but that decreased shrub composition and quantity. Currently, approximately 2,000 mule deer and 1,200 elk use the area as critical winter habitat, but it once sustained upwards of 40,000 mule deer.

Potlatch Wetland & Upland Habitat Enhancement

A rising water table due to increased irrigation caused approximately 20 acres of Potlatch Corporation land near Boardman to become unsuitable for farming. An A&H grant allowed Potlatch Corporation to create a wetland on those 20 acres by deepening the area which now provides year-round open water and enhanced habitat diversity while minimizing cattail proliferation. The Columbia Basin has an extremely small percentage of riparian areas and the creation of this wetland has greatly enhanced the use of this area by migrating waterfowl, upland game birds, neotropical migrant songbirds, game mammals and nongame species. Potlatch will allow public access through 2008 with the possibility of renegotiating for a new contract period during 2008-2015.

Coombs Canyon Regulated Hunt Area

The Pendleton area contains a significant populations of ring-necked pheasant, partridge and quail. Access to hunt this area, however, is severely limited. The Wolfe Hereford Ranch, Rosemary Scheuning and Forth Ranches, Inc., have entered an agreement with ODFW through an A&H grant to provide upland bird hunting and a youth mule deer buck hunt on 14,000 acres in return for Oregon State Police monitoring, planting Conservation Reserve Program land, control of yellow starthistle and installation of guzzlers to provide a water source.

Rogers Property Purchase

ODFW recently purchased 82 acres on the Owyhee River with A&H funds to provide the public with river access and great opportunities to hunt for waterfowl and upland birds. This once-in-a-lifetime chance to permanently acquire the property will ensure hunting and fishing opportunities in an area with limited public access. The property is located near the confluence of the Snake and Owyhee rivers.

Willamette Private Lands Law Enforcement

Private timber companies own extensive tracts of forested areas within Oregon. Outdoor recreationists have been allowed onto these lands for years. But problems with vandalism, garbage dumping, firewood gathering and wildlife violations caused some timber companies to limit access to their lands. An A&H grant will provide for Oregon State Police patrols on 1.25 million acres of private timber lands, which will be open for public hunting access for five years. Twenty cooperating landowners have agreed to allow access in return for law enforcement.
ACCESS & HABITAT PROGRAM GRANTEES AND COOPERATORS FOR 1999-2001

Abiqua Basin Volunteers
Francis Albro
Alder Creek Ranch
Jill Anderson
Audubon Society
Avery Properties
Baker County Weed Levy
Prince Baker
Dave Banson
Ben Beldon
Ray Belknap
Beyer Tree Farm
Ryan Bishop
Blue Mountain Elk Initiative
Boise Cascade
Boy Scout Volunteers
Don Bower
Lee Bradshaw
Ed Brentano
Dale Brock
Bureau of Land Management
C&L Farms
Campbell Group
Cascade Timber Consulting Inc.
Kendle Cates
Central Oregon Audubon Society
Brad Chase
Don Christensen
Hubert Christensen
Marshall Christianson
Tim Cholewinski
Confederated Tribes of the Siletz
Coquille Watershed Association
Coquille Watershed Research Institute
Crown Pacific Ltd.
Erin Daum
Mr. & Mrs. Dawson
Dan Deboie
Art DeJager
Calvin DeJong
Demaris Ranch
Owen Denny
Deschutes Basin Land Trust
Diamond Wood Products
Bob Doefler
Terry Drestler
Ducks Unlimited
Peter Duinsdale
Eastern Oregon Agriculture Research Center
Eastern Oregon Sportsmen’s Association
Gerald Eavers
Eichler Brothers Farms
Scott Ellis
Emory Invest
Gene Engblom
Evenson Timber Land Agency, Inc.
Roger Fitts
Forest Systems Inc.
Forest Tree Assoc.
Bob and Charlotte Forster
Forth Ranches, Inc.
Foundation for North American Wild Sheep
Michael & Cynthia Frazier
Frank Lumber Co.
Freres Lumber
Marie Gadotti
Jim Gardner
Georgia Pacific Co.
Brian & Garrett Glaser
Mike Glavey
GMO Forestry Fund
Johannes Goddik
Danny Goffin
Golden Valley Farm
Bill Gooding
Dave Goracke
Jeff Gorake
Tom Gorake
Guistina Land and Timber
Guistina Resources
Guistina Woodlands
Governor’s Watershed Enhancement Board
Hampton Tree Farm Affiliates
John Hancock
Butch Hanson
Don Hanson
James Hart
Jim Hathaway
Jim Hayes
Chris & Donna Heffernan
John Heiser
Blake & Robin Hennings
Chet Hettinga
Mark Heuett
Roger Hilderbrandt
Horning Ranch
Tom Hunton
Jim Hutchins
Ken Hutchinson
Ioka Farms
John Day ”Feed the Deer Fund”
Sid and Nancy Johnson
Curtis Jones Jr.
Steve and Nori Kaser
David Kauer
Marty Kent
Kerns Rainbow Ranch
Phil Ketscher
Tom Ketscher
Allen Keudell
Joe Kirk
Paul Kirsch
The Klamath Tribes
Bradley Klann
Lou Kokkeler
Veldon Kropf
Dale Kuenzi
Arthur Kupillas
Ron Lay
Phil Layman
Gary Leinonen
Lincoln County Sheriffs Dept.
Lincoln Timber LLC
Bob Lindsay
Chris Lindseth
Linn County Sheriff’s Office
Linn County Small Woodland Owners
Linn Forest Protective Association
Longview Fibre Co.
CH Loos
Lowden Family LLC
Scott & Mary Madison
Tom Malphus
Spencer Martin
Scott McClaran
Scott McDaniel
Tom McKay
Mealy Timber Co.
Miami Corporation
Mike Miller
Morgass Grazing Association
The Mule Deer Foundation
Paul Mulkey
Jerry Mullen
Myrtle Point Outdoor Class
Warren Nakkela
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
National Wild Turkey Federation
Native Plant Society of Oregon
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Nez Perce Tribe
Terry Nusom
Hull Oaks
The Old Bird Hunters
Olympic Resource Management
Olympic Resources
Oregon Department of Agriculture
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
Oregon Department of Forestry
Oregon Department of Transportation
Oregon Hunters Association
Oregon State Police
OSU Extension
OSU School of Forestry
Oregon Stewardship Program
Oregon Trout
Oregon Tillamook Railroad Authority
Oregon’s Upland Bird Stamp Program
Pacificorp
Lee Palmer
Parry Hurliman Logging
Gary Perkins
Larry Pettyjohn
Pheasants Forever
Pioneer Resources
Alfred Pohlschnieder
Portland General Electric
Potlatch Corporation
Paul Proudfoot
Quail Unlimited
Rosco & Lyndale Qualls
Mark Reitman
Restoration & Enhancement Program
Ken Reynolds
Riverbend Farms
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Floyd Rogers
Randy Rohde
James Rookard
James M. Root
Rosboro Lumber
Tom Roth
Rudio Mt. Timber Co.
Ruffed Grouse Society
Ron Sacchi
Sherman Sallee
Salmonberry STEP Volunteers
Mike Sappa
Gerald & Judith Scanlan
Seneca Jones Timber
Sewel & Waldo Owners
Bob Sheehy
Howell Sheldon
Chris Shipley
Simpson Timber
Small Woodlands Association
Ben Smith
Erwin Smutz
South Santiam Tree Farm
Southworth Brothers, Inc.
Stahlbush Island Farm
Starfire Lumber Co
Starker Forests, Inc.
Stimson Lumber Co.
Bud Sunrue
Swanson Superior
Taylor Grazing Range Improvement Fund
Kurt Thomas
Ron Thomas
Brian Thompson
The Timber Co.
Doug Tippett
Paul Thorp
Tri-Co. Weed Management Area
Trust for Public Lands of Portland
Bert Udell
Umpqua Soil, Water & Conservation District
Russ Underwood
Union County Noxious Weed Agency
U.S Army Corps of Engineers
U.S.Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S Forest Service
U.S Soil Conservation Service
U.S. Timberlands
Gary Vacht
Fred Van Beck
Dave Vanasche
Bob Vanderzanden
Clarence Vanelle
Don Walker
Wallowa County Weed District
Wallowa Soil, Water & Conservation District
Larry Warfel
Harold Weaver
Wetland Reserve Program
Weyerhaeuser Co.
Dick Wilkinson
Willamette Industries
Tim Winn
Phil Wolf
Wolfe Hereford Ranch
City of Yachats
Dave Young

Landowners and Hunters Together for Wildlife
Project Distribution

The 24 projects approved through December 2000 are located throughout the state, reflecting the general distribution of private lands in Oregon.