



Oregon

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Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Lauri Aunan, Grant Program Manager
Bev Goodreau, Grant Program Specialist

**SUBJECT: Agenda Item N: Small Grant Program
September 16-17, 2008 OWEB Board Meeting**

I. Introduction

This staff report provides information on the 2005-2007 Small Grant Program awards, updates the status of 2007-2009 awards and discusses potential future review of the program. Staff plan to report on the 2007-2009 Small Grant Program awards by early 2010.

II. Background

In 1999, OWEB was seeking ways to be more responsive to small, straightforward restoration grant applications. During this time, the Legislature added a budget note to OWEB's budget to encourage the agency to initiate a county-based, local cost-share program.

In response to these identified needs, in September of 2000, the Board authorized the formation of a Board subcommittee to provide guidance for developing a Small Grant Program (SGP). The subcommittee developed nine overarching policy objectives (Attachment A), which the Board approved at its January 2001 meeting. At that meeting, the Board also authorized staff's initiation of rulemaking to develop a program with the nine policy objectives serving as a guide. A Rules Advisory Committee (RAC) — composed of representatives of the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts, Soil and Water Conservation Commission, watershed councils, and other interests — worked to develop SGP rules.

In January 2002, the Board adopted administrative rules establishing a Small Grant Program with the goal to support implementation of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds by funding small, straightforward restoration projects designed to improve water quality, water quantity, and fish and wildlife habitat. The SGP encourages landowner participation in watershed improvement by making funds available more quickly than is possible through OWEB's Regular Grant Program and often leads to implementation of larger projects with greater impact on watershed health.

Twenty-eight Small Grant teams (Attachment B) consisting of representatives from local watershed councils, soil and water conservation districts, and tribes, are each allocated \$100,000

per biennium to put toward restoration projects of \$10,000 or less, a total commitment of \$2.8 million in capital (Lottery) funds each biennium.

III. Small Grant Funding Process

Small Grant Program funding is distributed through each of the 28 Small Grant teams (SGT). Each biennium SGTs agree upon bylaws and procedures using an OWEB template, deciding locally how they will evaluate Small Grant applications to recommend to OWEB staff for funding. The SGTs identify priority watershed concerns based on current information about the condition of the watershed and its limiting factors to support native fish populations and meet water quality standards. The SGTs use the list of eligible project types provided in rule to prioritize their watershed concerns by rating each project type high, medium or low.

Each SGT is responsible for local outreach concerning the availability of Small Grant funds. At a minimum, SGTs establish two-week windows four times in the state fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), during which they or their designated locally based committee will receive applications. The local evaluation committee reviews project applications and makes project funding recommendations to OWEB staff. Staff review them to verify that the application is consistent with the SGT's local priorities and with OWEB's statutes and administrative rules.

For the 2001-2003 biennium, SGTs recommended approximately \$2.4 million in Small Grant funding for 403 projects, each averaging \$6,200. All of those projects have been completed.

For the 2003-2005 biennium, the Board again allocated \$2.8 million for the Small Grant Program. The 28 SGTs recommended almost \$2.5 million for 384 projects, which averaged about \$6,300 each. All of the 2003-2005 projects have been completed.

IV. 2005-2007 Small Grant Program Biennial Report

In May 2005, the Board awarded \$2.8 million in capital funds for the SGP for the 2005-2007 biennium. Over the biennium, the 28 SGTs recommended 378 grants for funding totaling over \$2.5 million (Attachment C) with an average grant amount of \$6,600. At this time, 281 (74%) of the projects have been completed.

As shown by Attachment C, some SGTs were unable to recommend their full \$100,000 for small grant funding within the biennium. This was largely due to staffing changes within watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts and within the SGTs themselves. Monies not used by the end of the biennium (June 30, 2007) were recaptured to be allocated by the Board to fund other types of restoration projects.

During the 2005-2007 biennium, the SGP continued to fund a variety of projects from a low of \$478 to the maximum of \$10,000. The Small Grant rules designate the following project types as eligible for Small Grants: instream process and function, fish passage, urban impact reduction, riparian process and function, wetland process and function, upland process and function, water quantity and quality/irrigation efficiency, and road impact reduction. Attachment D shows how the Small Grant Teams prioritized and used their funding during the biennium.

Additional SGP information for the 2005-2007 biennium is contained in the Small Grant Program Biennial Report 2005-2007, which will be distributed at the September Board meeting.

V. Current (2007-2009) Biennium Update

In May 2007, the Board again awarded \$2.8 million in capital funds for the Small Grant Program for the 2007-2009 biennium. As of August 19, 2008, the 28 SGTs have recommended 244 grants for funding for over \$1.6 million, which average about \$6,650. Staff plan to provide a 2007-2009 Small Grant Program Biennial Report by early 2010.

The Small Grant Program continues to be extremely popular because of its ability to fund restoration projects more quickly with less process and paperwork than the regular grant program. The program also serves an important function by fostering local collaboration and partnerships.

VI. Small Grant Program Planning

Typically, OWEB has asked the Board to allocate Small Grant Program funding toward the end of each biennium. Staff plan to propose the 2009-2011 Small Grant Program allocation at the May 2009 Board Meeting.

The Small Grant Program rules require OWEB, in consultation with representatives of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission, tribes and Small Grant Teams, to evaluate the need for program improvements and administrative rule changes. Staff plan to initiate stakeholder discussions after the 2009 legislative session. Potential items to review include the \$10,000 cap on individual Small Grants and how the Small Grant process is working.

VII. Recommendation

This is an informational item. No Board action is requested at this time.

Attachments

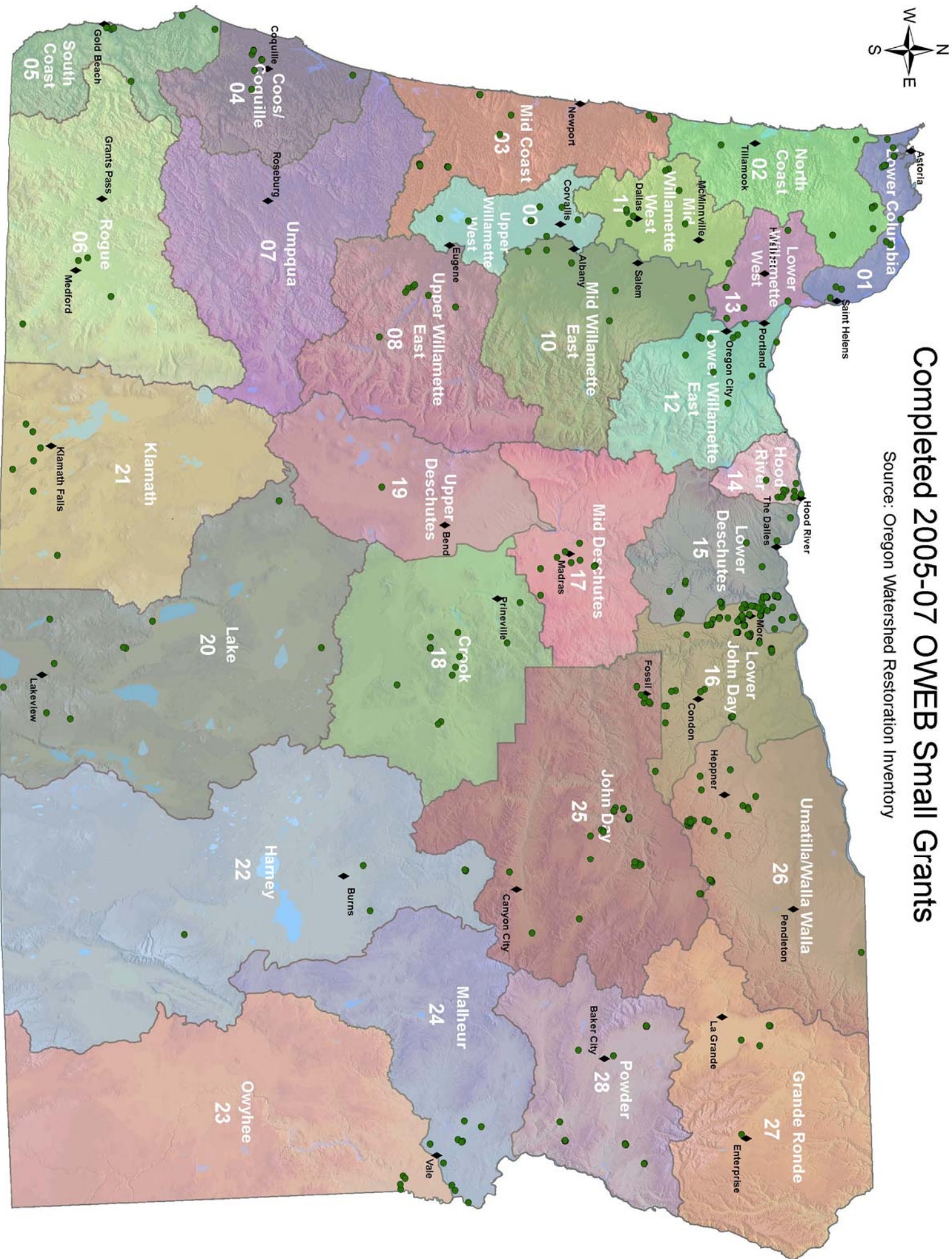
- A. Small Grant Program Policy Objectives
- B. Small Grant Team Map
- C. 2005-2007 Small Grant Funding by Team
- D. 2005-2007 Small Grant Priority Watershed Concerns

**Small Grant Program Policy Objectives
Approved by the OWEB Board January 2001**

1. Make small amounts of funds more available to meet local project needs outside of OWEB's existing watershed improvement grant program, thereby encouraging voluntary landowner actions.
2. Treat the source of watershed health problems through technically sound projects, and in doing so, demonstrate benefits to aquatic species, wildlife and/or watershed health across all land uses.
3. Support practices that implement Agricultural Water Quality Management Plans and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) in the context of watershed restoration.
4. Target priorities and provide adequate funds to support Senate Bill 1010 implementation.
5. Provide a mechanism for ensuring local and regional resource concerns are addressed.
6. Vest local entities with the role of establishing local program priorities and making funding decisions to implement those priorities.
7. Encourage local partnerships between watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs).
8. Recognize OWEB's statutory charge to establish statewide and regional priorities in a way that acknowledges and provides a broader context for locally established priorities.
9. Ensure OWEB's fiscal and administrative accountability.

Completed 2005-07 OWEB Small Grants

Source: Oregon Watershed Restoration Inventory



**Small Grant Program Funding
2005-07 Biennium**

Team #	Name	Board Award	Total Funded	Not Allocated
01	Lower Columbia Small Grant Team	100,000.00	98,717.07	1,282.93
02	North Coast Small Grant Team	100,000.00	98,322.96	1,677.04
03	Mid Coast Small Grant Team	100,000.00	62,849.75	37,150.25
04	Coos Coquille Small Grant Team	100,000.00	63,165.00	36,835.00
05	South Coast Small Grant Team	100,000.00	95,420.00	4,580.00
06	Rogue Basin Small Grant Team	100,000.00	61,413.00	38,587.00
07	Umpqua Small Grant Team	100,000.00	96,847.00	3,153.00
08	Upper Willamette East Small Grant Team	100,000.00	87,786.07	12,213.93
09	Upper Willamette West Small Grant Team	100,000.00	98,007.83	1,992.17
10	Mid Willamette East Small Grant Team	100,000.00	99,999.51	0.49
11	Mid Willamette West Small Grant Team	100,000.00	99,025.68	974.32
12	Lower Willamette East Small Grant Team	100,000.00	99,617.00	383.00
13	Lower Willamette West Small Grant Team	100,000.00	98,652.00	1,348.00
14	Hood River Small Grant Team	100,000.00	99,663.95	336.05
15	Lower Deschutes Small Grant Team	100,000.00	98,150.55	1,849.45
16	Lower John Day Small Grant Team	100,000.00	88,207.26	11,792.74
17	Mid Deschutes Small Grant Team	100,000.00	90,901.55	9,098.45
18	Crook Small Grant Team	100,000.00	100,000.00	0.00
19	Upper Deschutes Small Grant Team	100,000.00	35,860.00	64,140.00
20	Lake Small Grant Team	100,000.00	99,545.00	455.00
21	Klamath Basin Small Grant Team	100,000.00	95,341.05	4,658.95
22	Harney Basin Small Grant Team	100,000.00	85,916.40	14,083.60
23	Owyhee Small Grant Team	100,000.00	100,000.00	0.00
24	Malheur Small Grant Team	100,000.00	99,998.00	2.00
25	John Day Small Grant Team	100,000.00	99,807.75	192.25
26	Umatilla-Walla Walla Small Grant Team	100,000.00	94,690.83	5,309.17
27	Grande Ronde Small Grant Team	100,000.00	89,320.00	10,680.00
28	Powder Basin	100,000.00	100,000.00	0.00
	TOTALS	\$2,800,000.00	\$2,537,225.21	\$262,774.79

**Small Grants by Priority Watershed Concern
2005-07 Biennium**

ATTACHMENT D

#	Team Name	# Instream Process	# Fish Passage	# Urban Impact Reduction	# Riparian Process	# Wetland Process	# Upland Process	# Water Quantity & Quality	# Road Impact Reduction
01	Lower Columbia	2	3	0	5	1	1	0	0
02	North Coast	3	1	0	9	0	0	0	0
03	Mid Coast	5	3	0	2	0	0	0	0
04	Coos Coquille	0	4	1	1	0	1	0	0
05	South Coast	3	4	0	3	1	1	0	0
06	Rogue Basin	0	0	0	3	0	2	5	0
07	Umpqua	2	0	0	6	1	0	0	0
08	Upper Willamette East	0	0	0	13	0	1	0	0
09	Upper Willamette West	1	0	0	6	2	4	2	0
10	Mid Willamette East	0	0	0	4	0	9	0	0
11	Mid Willamette West	2	3	0	3	2	5	2	0
12	Lower Willamette East	0	1	1	8	0	7	0	0
13	Lower Willamette West	0	0	1	6	0	5	1	0
14	Hood River	1	0	1	3	0	2	6	0
15	Lower Deschutes	0	0	0	2	0	17	2	0
16	Lower John Day	0	0	0	0	0	23	1	0
17	Mid Deschutes	0	0	0	1	1	0	8	1
18	Crook	0	0	0	4	0	8	2	0
19	Upper Deschutes	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
20	Lake	1	1	0	1	1	5	1	1
21	Klamath Basin	2	0	0	0	0	3	10	0
22	Harney Basin	0	0	0	3	0	7	0	0
23	Owyhee	1	0	0	2	0	0	9	0
24	Malheur	0	0	0	1	0	1	11	0
25	John Day	0	0	0	3	0	18	0	0
26	Umatilla-Walla Walla	0	1	0	0	0	13	1	0
27	Grande Ronde	0	0	0	1	0	11	2	1
28	Powder Basin	1	0	0	3	0	3	5	0
Total # Each Project Type		25	22	4	94	9	147	69	3