

Salmon Restoration in Oregon: Planning for High-Impact Restoration Under the Western Oregon State Forests Habitat Conservation Plan

Salmon Restoration in Oregon: Planning for High-Impact Restoration Under the Western Oregon State Forests Habitat Conservation Plan



Prepared for
The Wild Salmon Center

By Zanna Kortenhof

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning
University of Wisconsin–Madison

April 2026

Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture
COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

WILD SALMON CENTER

Acknowledgements

My biggest thanks and gratitude go to Cyndi Curtis, and the Wild Salmon Center, for answering my unsolicited email seeking a project and allowing me to do this work, despite being located many miles away from the salmon we advocate for. I feel so lucky to have received your mentorship, advice, and friendship over the last year, and I can't wait to live a little closer.

Thank you to my faculty advisor, Professor Edna Ely-Ledesma, for the flexibility and the encouragement to work on a project that I'm passionate about. I would also like to thank Professor Anna Bierbrauer for serving on my committee. To the folks in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, the UW-Madison PEOPLE Program, and Common Wealth Development, thank you for your encouragement and friendship.

I am so grateful to the alumni of Quest University Canada who inspire and motivate me to continue learning and to continually question everything. I feel lucky to be among your ranks. Apologies to my dog, Nellie, for the shorter walks than she deserves these past couple of weeks. Finally, I can't thank my community of family and friends enough, without whom I would not be where I am today. And to my twin brother, who is finishing his own planning degree in Portland, for taking every leap with me.

Zanna Kortenhof

About the Project

This project was completed in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. In undertaking this work, I sought a salmon conservation project that would allow me to apply planning methods to a complex, multi-jurisdictional natural-resource issue. I partnered with the Wild Salmon Center who are recognized for their leadership in salmon conservation and basin-scale planning, to support their ongoing collaboration with the Oregon Department of Forestry on strategic, science-based restoration under the Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan. The recommendations within this plan are intended for use by the Oregon Department of Forestry, while the broader contextual analysis serves to inform readers of the M.S. URPL professional project.

Title Page Image Credit:
Image 1. Siletz Watershed, Smith Creek by David Herasimtschuk
Image 2. Coho Salmon Underwater, Wild Salmon Center

Acronyms

BOF	Oregon Board of Forestry
CCP	Coast Coho Partnership
CFTLC	Council of Forest Trust Land Counties
CSFL	Common School Forest Lands
DEQ	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
DSL	Oregon Department of State Lands
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ESU	Evolutionarily Significant Unit
HCA	Habitat Conservation Area
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NFWF	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NRCS	National Resources Conservation Service
OC	Oregon Coast
ODA	Oregon Department of Agriculture
ODF	Oregon Department of Forestry
ODFW	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
OWEB	Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
RM	River Mile
RCA	Riparian Conservation Area
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
SWCD	Soil and Water Conservation District
TEP	Tillamook Estuaries Partnership
TNC	he Nature Conservancy
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WSC	Wild Salmon Center

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David Herasimtschuk

Executive Summary

The Project

This project presents a framework to guide how the Oregon Department of Forestry can identify, prioritize, and support high-impact salmon restoration projects on state forestlands under the Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan. Under the 70-year permit term outlined in their HCP, ODF will be required to complete 440 stream improvement projects, on average 5-7 projects per year. While there is no singular definition of a high-impact project, they tend to be projects substantial enough in size to restore watershed processes that were there historically. These projects are most often partner-associated and within high-priority focal areas identified by existing basin-scale strategic plans. The HCP's conservation requirements represent an increase to ODF's restoration obligations; this project considers the question: What systems need to be in place to facilitate and incentivise high-impact stream restoration projects under ODFs increased project obligation?

This project approaches this question by examining ODF's regulatory context, identifying barriers to high-impact restoration, and evaluating existing basin-scale priorities identified in the Coast Coho Partnership's Strategic Action Plans. The resulting plan is formed by the following:

1. A contextual discussion of Oregon's forestland policy, governance, and ownership history that clarifies the legal, economic, and ecological context in which ODF operates.
2. A strategic restoration framework intended to maximize ODF's restoration impact including recommendations for a more robust project crediting and selection system, recommendations for selecting future projects throughout the 70-year permit term, and a wood banking strategy.
3. A 5-year work plan for ODF's Western State Forests that identifies high-priority projects from Coast Coho Partnership's strategic action plans that present opportunities to fulfill ODF's required stream restoration project quota under the Western State Forest HCP.

Background

A Habitat Conservation Plan is a planning document prepared to help land managers and owners meet the rules of the federal Endangered Species Act[1] while allowing for certain covered activities (e.g.

1 The ESA is a U.S. law protecting imperiled species and their habitats from extinction as a consequence of economic growth and development. It authorizes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the National Marine Fisheries Service (i.e. NOAA Fisheries) to list species as threatened or endangered, prohibits "take" of them, and mandates consultation to avoid jeopardizing listed species (Endangered Species Act of 1973, 1973).

timber harvest, development, road management). By nature, these activities result in harm to endangered species and their habitat (this harm to endangered species is referred to as "take[2]"). Landowners must develop an HCP in order to obtain an Incidental Take Permits from from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, which allows a specified level of incidental harm to the species included in the plan. ITPs provide landowners with legal protection under the Endangered Species Act by authorizing a defined level of incidental harm, as long as they assess those impacts and implement the mitigation measures outlined in their HCP.

The Western Oregon State Forest HCP covers a 70-year permit term and encompasses all ODF managed state forestlands west of Oregon's Cascade Range, this constitutes 613,663 acres of Board of Forestry land and 25,826 acres of Oregon Department of State Lands Common School Funds Land, in total 639,489 acres of state-owned forestland. Covered activity under the HCP includes timber harvest, stand management, road system management, recreation infrastructure construction and maintenance, and HCP conservation actions. There are 17 species proposed for coverage in the draft HCP: 10 fish, 2 birds, 3 salamanders, and 2 mammals (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022). The HCP describes the potential effects of ODF's activity on these species; it also describes a conservation strategy to mitigate their impact. Although the HCP covers many species, this project centers on salmon, whose decline produces cascading ecological effects throughout Oregon's rivers, estuaries, and coastal ecosystems. Of the HCP's 10 covered fish, nine are salmonid; as such, this plan focuses on the stream improvement project requirements that drive salmon habitat restoration. Under the HCP, ODF must complete 440 stream-improvement projects over the 70-year permit term.

Pacific salmon have an expansive range, spawning in rivers and rearing in streams and estuaries around the Pacific Rim (Final ESA Recovery Plan for Oregon Coast Coho Salmon (Oncorhynchus Kisutch), 2016). Many Pacific salmon populations in Oregon are threatened primarily due to habitat loss and degraded habitat quality over the last 150 years. Reduced amount and complexity of habitat, degraded water quality, and blocked and impaired fish passages remain the primary threats to their recovery (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2007).

Translating these ecological needs into on-the-ground restoration is shaped by the complex governance structure of Oregon's state forests. Management of Oregon's state forestland is challenging due to its intersecting, often conflicting, ecological and economic obligations. The majority of state forest acreage, over 613,000 acres, was acquired from rural counties. The legal framework for this acquisition created a statutory requirement that state managed forests continue to generate timber revenue for the counties that the land was aquired from. The remaining state forest land is managed to provide revenue for Oregon's Common School Fund. Oregon's Greatest Permanent Value Rule[3] defines the state's legal obligations for the management of state forestland. The GPV historically required management of state forestland primarily as timberlands, but it was updated in 1998 to require management for a mix of social, economic, and environmental benefits.

This creates an ongoing tension: ODF must meet Endangered Species Act obligations while sustaining rural economies and maintaining predictable timber revenue. The Western Oregon State Forest HCP is intended to stabilize this landscape by defining the conservation commitments ODF must meet in order to obtain federal permits that authorize continued management and harvest of state forestland. HCP proponents argue that relying on timber sales to fund public services is increasingly untenable: harvest levels fluctuate year to year, and climate-driven disturbances make long-term yields less predictable. State forests make up 4% of Oregon's forestlands, but provide 10% of the total timber harvested in the state each year; state forests are disproportionately commercially managed to fulfill obligations to counties and in pursuance of the Greatest Permanent Value Rule (Baumhardt, 2024). Understanding the ownership history and revenue expectations tied to state forestland clarifies why the HCP is an essential

2 The term "take" describes the act of harassing, harming, wounding, and killing threatened or endangered species (Endangered Species Act of 1973, 1973).

3 The Greatest Permanent Value Rule (ORS. 530.050) defines how State Forests should be managed, requiring that forests are managed to ensure "the greatest permanent value of such lands to the state" (ORS. 530.050).

tool for land management. While ODF works to manage these tensions under their HCP, counties must also work to slowly de-couple logging revenue from their funding streams in order to build long-term community resilience.

This project aims to address ways that ODF can strategically select projects to fulfill their HCP steam restoration project obligation, and considers what systems need to be in place to encourage high-impact work. As of March 2026, NOAA is still working with ODF to define how project crediting and compliance will function under the HCP and to design a system that will measure ODF's progress towards their HCP restoration requirement. Although ODF generally aims to pursue meaningful restoration, its limited budget, programmatic structure, and obligations under Oregon's Greatest Permanent Value rule constrain what it can realistically implement. Recent ODF–NOAA conversations and ODF's past practices indicate that, without firm incentives, ODF is likely to prioritize timber-sale-related[4] restoration projects. This plan aims to approach this issue by providing recommendations that incentivize high-impact, partner driven work.

The Opportunity

Oregon has a dense landscape of plans and agreements that guide salmon restoration and forest management. These statewide and federal frameworks identify priority species, habitats, and actions across multiple jurisdictions, but they operate at broad scales that can be difficult to translate into on-the-ground restoration. A common emphasis across salmon restoration planning is that recovery ultimately depends on implementing locally developed plans with finer-scale, targeted conservation actions. Decisions about where and how these actions are carried out must be made in locally convened forums so that input from landowners and other stakeholders can be fully integrated into both long-term habitat restoration strategies and the selection of near-term projects. SAPs, and the Coast Coho Partnership, are structured to meet those needs for and with the communities within each basin.

The Coast Coho Partnership is facilitated by the Wild Salmon Center in collaboration with Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, NOAA Fisheries, the NOAA Restoration Center, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Since 2015, the CCP has developed basin-specific strategic action plans. SAPs are built through collaboration with Oregon's uniquely robust network of watershed councils, which serve as locally grounded stewards in nearly every basin. SAPs draw from broad state and federal planning frameworks to identify basin-scale priorities and projects; this existing work offers ODF a practical way to identify restoration actions that are high-impact and locally supported.

ODF will be required to complete 440 stream restoration projects over their 70-year HCP permit term. Existing, in-progress, and proposed SAPs already cover 73% of the Western Oregon State Forest HCP permit area, providing ODF an opportunity to align its restoration obligations with established, high-value, partner-led projects.

This project leverages that opportunity by proposing a five-year strategic work plan for ODF's Western State Forests that identifies near-term, SAP-aligned projects capable of meeting ODF's restoration requirements under the HCP. This five-year work plan reflects the near-term window in which partner-led projects are already in early planning stages and can realistically be implemented within the first phase of the HCP while robust, long-term project selection processes develop. In addition to the near-term work plan, this project considers the systems needed to facilitate and incentivise high-impact, partner-based stream restoration under ODF's expanded project obligations, and suggests recommendations for a high-impact project crediting system and a framework for ODF's assessment and intake of partner-projects. These tools aim to provide ODF with an approach for basin-informed restoration that is aligned with partner priorities and incentivises high-value restoration work.

Implications for Planners

Forestry management in Oregon presents planners with a complex landscape: overlapping

4 Timber-sale projects are stream-restoration actions completed inside active timber harvest areas. Because the contracted logging company already has equipment and access roads in place, these projects can be implemented quickly and without additional permitting. However, the sale boundary limits which stream reaches can be treated, and the short planning window (often only a few months) makes it difficult to pursue larger, grant-funded, or partner-led restoration efforts

planning efforts, statutory revenue obligations, endangered species protections, and changing political environments. The Western Oregon State Forest HCP is not the only forestry HCP effort in the state. The Private Forest Accord, signed in 2021 by conservation groups, timber companies, and the Oregon Small Woodlands Association, updates Oregon's forest practice laws, and outlines key goals that should allow ODF to receive federal approval for a Private Forest Accord HCP. The Private Forest Accord HCP (anticipated 2026-2027), will be implemented and managed by ODF and will set management practices for private forestland, accounting for 36% of forestland across Oregon. As Oregon moves toward HCP-based management across both private and state ownership, clear and replicable strategies for identifying high-impact stream restoration work will be essential. This project provides one such framework.

For the federal agencies managing ODF's HCP compliance (NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), it provides recommendations for a robust stream restoration project crediting system. For ODF, it provides a 5-year work plan of existing partner-based restoration work occurring within their HCP permit area. For ODF and local partners it outlines a recommendations for advancing future high-impact projects throughout the 70-year permit term. More broadly, it demonstrates how planners can utilize existing partner-based work to implement high-impact stream restoration projects.



Figure 1. Example of a large wood installation, Mill Beaty, Mid-Coast Watershed Council, 2024

Section 1

Geography & Scope of the Western Oregon State Forest HCP

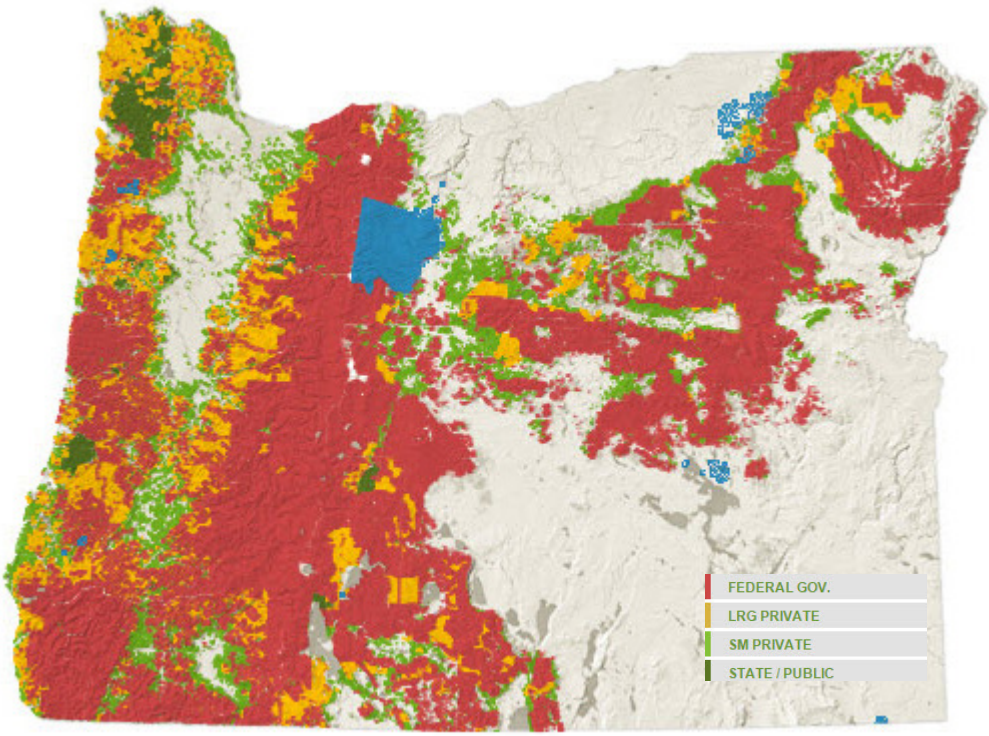


Figure 2. Oregon Forest Ownership. Oregon Department of State Lands. "Oregon Department of State Lands: Forestlands." Accessed March 26, 2026.

1.1 Forestland in Oregon

Forests cover over 20.5 million acres of Oregon, nearly half the state (Figure 2). The majority of forestland in Oregon, 60%, is owned by the federal government, 36% is owned privately, and 4% is owned by state and local governments (Table 1). Ownership of Oregon's ~1 million acres of state forestland is split between the Department of State Lands (DSL) and the Oregon Board of Forestry (BOF), with the Oregon Department of Forestry serving as land manager for most of the forestland (Council of Forest Trust Land Counties, n.d.).

ODF manages all 729,718 acres of BOF land and 25,826 acres of DSL's Common School Forest Lands (CSFL), the majority of which are located in western Oregon (Figure 3). Although ODF manages land for both state agencies, the revenue structures and management obligations differ because the lands were acquired under distinct legal authorities and for different public purposes. BOF lands are managed in trust for 15 counties who deeded the forestland to the BOF in the early-mid 20th century, these counties are now referred to as the Council of Forest Trust Land counties (CFTLC). When CFTLC originally deeded the land, the BOF was mandated to produce timber revenue to be shared between the CFTLC and the BOF; 63% to counties and 36% to the BOF. DSL's Common School Forest Lands were similarly intended to be managed for timber revenues that support the state's Common School Fund. This means that timber harvest revenue is a central funding source for many rural governments and Oregon's public schools. This revenue-generating structure shapes how ODF manages state forests and was the basis of the Greatest Permanent Value Rule, described below. Fire and storm events shape the ecology of Oregon's forests, and also explain patterns of public forest ownership today. Appendix A provides additional history on the acquisition of BOF and DSL lands and the revenue structures tied to those agreements.

1.2 Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan

The Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan (the HCP) is the tool ODF is using to comply with the federal Endangered Species Act while maintaining its forest management obligations. An HCP outlines the conservation commitments a landowner must make in order to obtain federal Incidental Take Permits (ITP), which authorize a defined level of incidental harm to ESA listed species. A fuller discussion of the HCP's regulatory context, development history, and legal basis is provided in Appendix B.

About 86% of state-owned forestland managed by ODF is covered by the Western Oregon State Forest HCP. The permit area[5] encompasses 639,489 acres; including all state forestlands west of the Cascade Range managed by ODF, this constitutes 613,663 acres of BOF land and 25,826 acres of CSFL, (Figure 3). Within the permit area, incidental take is authorized under ITPs, covered activities[6] occur, and conservation measures apply (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022). There are 17 species proposed for coverage in the draft HCP: 10 fish[7], 2 birds, 3 salamanders, and 2 mammals (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022). Of the 10 fish covered fish species; there are 9 salmonids and 1 smelt, all anadromous[8]

Greatest Permanent Value Rule

The Greatest Permanent Value Rule (ORS. 530.050) defines how State Forests should be managed, requiring that forests are managed to ensure "the greatest permanent value of such lands to the state" (ORS. 530.050). The GPV initially required the BOF to maximize timber production revenues, but in 1998 was redefined as a part of OAR 629-035 to formally require the State Forester to manage forestlands for a mix of social, economic, and environmental benefits. Today, the GPV rule defines these benefits as:

- Sustainable and predictable production of forest products that generate revenues for the benefit of the state, counties, and local taxing districts;
- Properly functioning aquatic habitats for salmonids, and other native fish and aquatic life;
- Habitats for native wildlife;
- Productive soil, and clean air and water;
- Protection against floods and erosion; and
- Recreation.

Ownership (2021)	Forestland (acres)	Percent of total
U.S. Forest Service	14,060,753	47%
Bureau of Land Management	3,616,018	12%
National Park Service	179,313	1%
Other federal	28,061	<1%
Total federal	**17,884,145**	**60%**
State	1,095,895	3%
County and municipal	222,012	<1%
Total state and county	**1,317,907**	**4%**
Large private landowners (individuals, families, companies, investment firms, etc.)	6,521,758	22%
Small private landowners (individuals, families, trusts, nonprofits, etc.)	3,542,360	12%
Native American tribal forestland	499,350	2%
Total private	**10,563,468**	**36%**
TOTAL FORESTLAND, all owners	**29,765,520**	**100%**

Table 1. Oregon Forest Ownership, Oregon Forest Resources Institute. "Who Owns the Forests?" 2021.

5 The permit area in the HCP is defined as the area where incidental take is covered under the ITPs where all covered activities will occur and where conservation measures will apply (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022).

6 Covered activity under the HCP includes timber harvest, stand management, road system management, recreation infrastructure construction and maintenance, and HCP conservation actions.

7 The Endangered Species Act lists Pacific salmon populations as evolutionarily significant units (ESU). ESUs are a Pacific salmon population or group of populations that are geographically close and substantially reproductively isolated from other populations; they each represent an important component of the evolutionary legacy of the species (NOAA Fisheries, 2022). For example, the Oregon Coast spring-run Chinook, Lower Columbia River Chinook, Upper Willamette River Chinook, and Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast Chinook are all listed as separate ESUs under the ESA.

8 "Anadromous" describes fish that migrate from saltwater to freshwater for spawning (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2026)

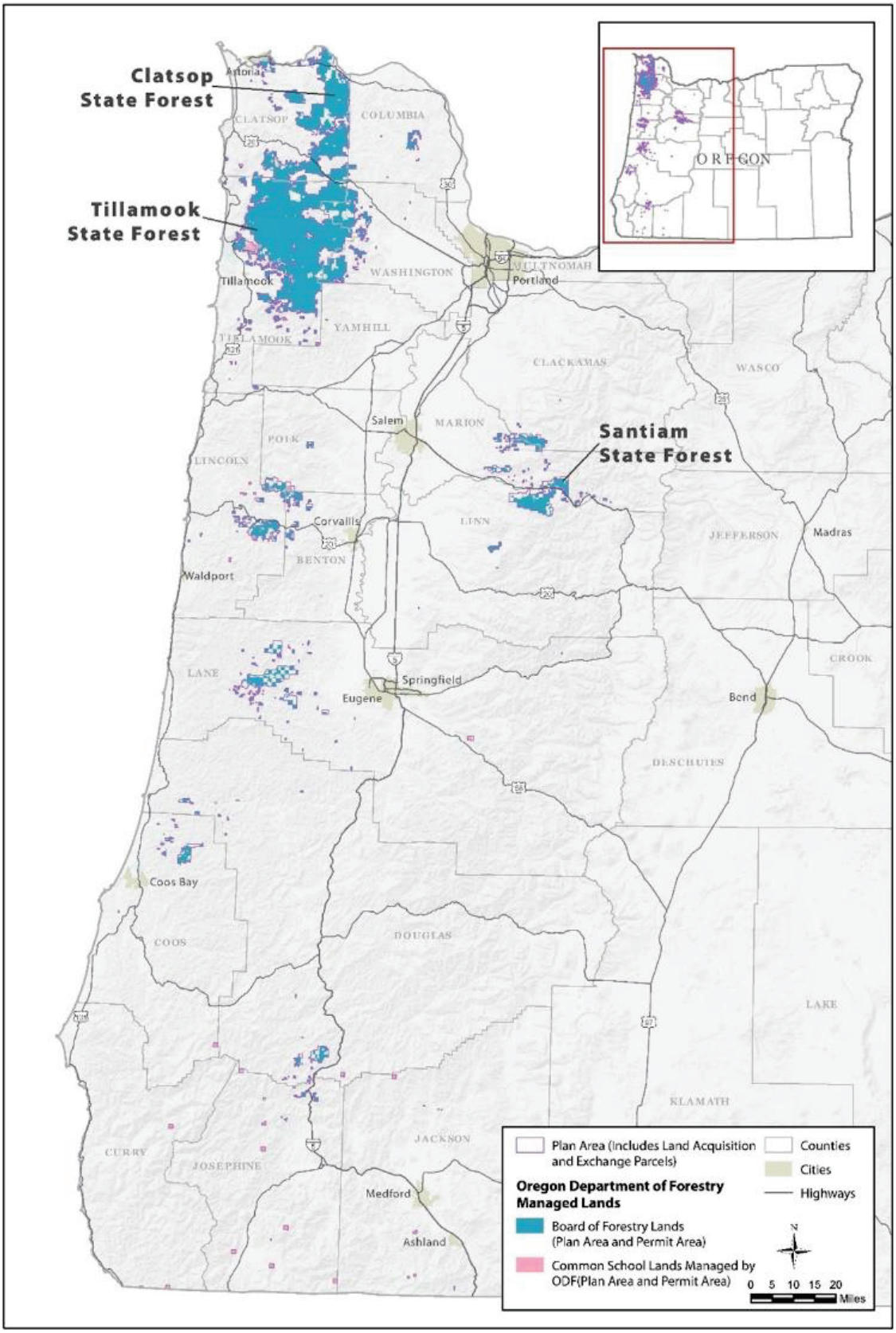


Figure 3. Western Oregon State Forest HCP Plan Area by ODF Ownership Type (Board of Forestry Lands and Common School Lands). Oregon Department of Forestry. Western Oregon State Forests Habitat Conservation Plan. (Salem, OR), no. Public Draft (February 2022).

(Figure 4). The HCP describes the potential effects of ODF's covered activity on the 17 species; it also describes a conservation strategy for these species. The permit term is 70 years.

1.3 How Land Ownership Impacts the HCP

The ownership and revenue structure of both BOF and DSL shape every aspect of how Oregon's state forests are managed. Because BOF lands are managed in trust for the CFTLC counties, timber harvest revenue remains a primary funding source for rural counties and schools, creating an expectation that state forests function as working forests.

BOF timber harvest represents a large share of county revenue. In 2025, harvest revenues made up one quarter of Tillamook County's general fund[9]. The reduction in timber harvest in the HCP is politically and economically sensitive for rural counties. The CFTLC opposed the HCP, along with many of its member counties. Under the HCP, CFTLC counties are forecasted to receive $51 million each year, $5.4 million less than in 2025 (Association of Oregon Counties & Oregon Department of Forestry, 2025). While some historic logging areas will be protected from logging under the HCP, new logging areas will open. County revenue distribution is tied to the location of the harvest; six of the CFTLC counties will earn larger shares in annual revenue than in prior years under the HCP, while eight forecast reductions. Clatsop and Washington Counties project the highest annual losses, $3 million and $7.6 million respectively (Baumhardt, 2024). Rural counties also anticipate forestry-related job losses due to the reduction in harvest. Rural counties' dependence on timber funds explains why many counties opposed the HCP; they fear that reduced harvest levels will destabilize their budgets and harm already burdened rural communities.

Rural Oregon counties don't just rely on harvest revenue, they also depend on employment in the forest sector. Forest sector jobs are expansive and include forestry management, logging, processing, and wood product manufacturing. In the 1950s, 16% of Oregon's workforce made their living cutting and processing timber (US Forest Forest, 2024). Annual timber harvests on federal land were cut in half following environmental lawsuits to protect the Northern Spotted Owl in the 1980s and 1990s, and timber companies increasingly relied on mechanized labor. These shifts led to the loss of many timber related jobs, leading to significant economic hardship in rural, timber-dependent communities. Today, forest sector jobs make up about 3% of Oregon's total workforce, but in some rural counties they still make up nearly a third of their economic base (Oregon Forest Resources Institute, 2023). Rural communities still depend on timber revenue and timber jobs, the HCP has largely been viewed as a threat to their livelihoods and communities. At the same time, the HCP preserves ODF's ability to continue logging on state forest. Its restoration commitments aim to improve the rivers, forests, and public lands that support recreation and tourism economies that many rural communities are increasingly turning to.

Changes to state forestland management take disproportionate blame today for reductions to rural budgets and economies. Realistically, regulation on federal and private timberlands (accounting for 60% and 36% of Oregon's forests respectively) has caused a far greater impact. The first major shift to Oregon's economic dependence on logging stemmed from reductions in timber harvest on federal land, followed by increasing ownership by large, private, non-local real estate trusts. Today, ownership of Oregon's private forestland is dominated by large real estate trusts and investment funds; these companies cut trees on a more rapid cycle and export additional timber overseas rather than using local workers to mill them (Schick et al., 2020). In 1999, Oregon's private timber severance tax was phased out; under the severance tax, private timber owners were required to pay a tax on the value of the trees they logged which was then used to fund local schools and governments. Now, only small private timber owners can choose to pay this tax as a means to reduce their annual property tax. It's estimated that the loss of severance tax revenues has cost Oregon counties $3 billion in the last 30 years (Schick et al., 2020).

HCP proponents argue that relying on timber sales to fund public services is increasingly untenable. Harvest levels fluctuate year to year and climate-driven disturbances make long-term yields less predictable. State forests make up 3% of Oregon's forestlands, but provide 10% of the total

9 The County's primary operating fund, supporting core departmental functions (Tillamook County, 2025)

timber harvested in the state each year; state forests are disproportionately commercially managed to fulfill obligations to counties and in pursuance of the Greatest Permanent Value Rule, which is exacerbated by the loss of severance tax revenue from private timberland (Baumhardt, 2022). The HCP sits directly atop this tension, it is designed to help ODF meet its ESA obligations, while still generating revenue counties depend on. Understanding ownership patterns of Oregon's state forestland helps clarify why the HCP is an essential tool for protecting endangered species, but it also illuminates the competing pressures and structural funding gaps that counties now face. While ODF pursues meaningful restoration work, counties must also work to slowly de-couple logging revenue from their funding streams in order to build long-term community resilience and decouple their stabilty on the harvest of public forests.

HCP Covered Fish:



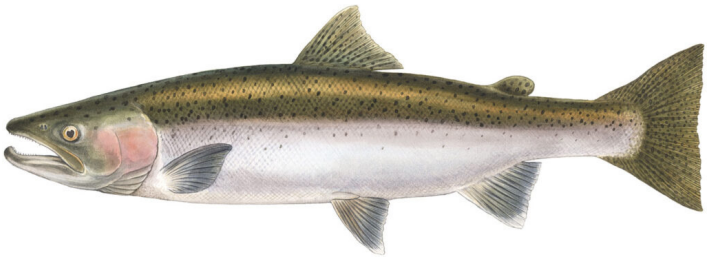
Chinook (King) (Oncorhynchus tshawytscha)



Coho (Silver) (Oncorhynchus kisutch)



Chum (Oncorhynchus keta)



Steelhead Trout (Oncorhynchus mykiss)



Eulachon (Thaleichthys pacificus)

Figure 4. HCP Covered Fish.Salmonid Paintings by Kate Spencer, © Kate Spencer, kate@katespencer.com, Eulachon image by NOAA Fisheries

Section 2

Why Salmon Matter & How They're Recovered

2.1 Keystone Species

All of the fish listed in the HCP are keystone species[10], meaning that their presence is critical for the stability of their ecosystem. Throughout their life cycle, salmon provide sustenance for 130 other aquatic and terrestrial organisms. Eggs provide food for macroinvertebrates and other salmonids, while fry, parr, and smolts feed other aquatic species and many bird species, like great blue herons and gulls (Tillamook Bay Watershed Coho Collaborative, 2026). As salmon spawn and die, forests and other plants directly benefit from marine-derived nutrients in the decaying fish. Trees near salmon streams have been shown to grow faster and stronger than trees without access to nutrients from decaying salmon (Quinn et al., 2018) Adult salmon that are carried away from riverbanks and eaten by scavengers similarly bring these nutrients inland, benefitting plants far outside riparian areas. When salmon populations decline, an ecological cascade of effects are felt through the food web and regional ecosystem.

Salmon are essential for more than just the regional ecosystem, they are also essential for many Indigenous Nations in Oregon. First People on the West Coast have harvested fish and shellfish since time immemorial to sustain both their communities and culture (Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, 2024). Historic and ongoing settler-colonial actions, including illegal and coercive treaties that displaced many Tribal communities from their homelands, along with the ongoing decline of salmon, have reduced access to important traditional foods for many Indigenous Peoples in Oregon. These losses affect not only the foods that sustain people physically, but also the cultural practices, community relationships, and economies that are tied to them. Further discussion on Indigenous Nations in Oregon can be found in Appendix C.

10 A keystone species is an organism that holds an ecosystem together, such that its removal would dramatically change or destabilize the system. Examples of keystone species in Oregon include the American beaver, sea otters, white oak, and wolves.

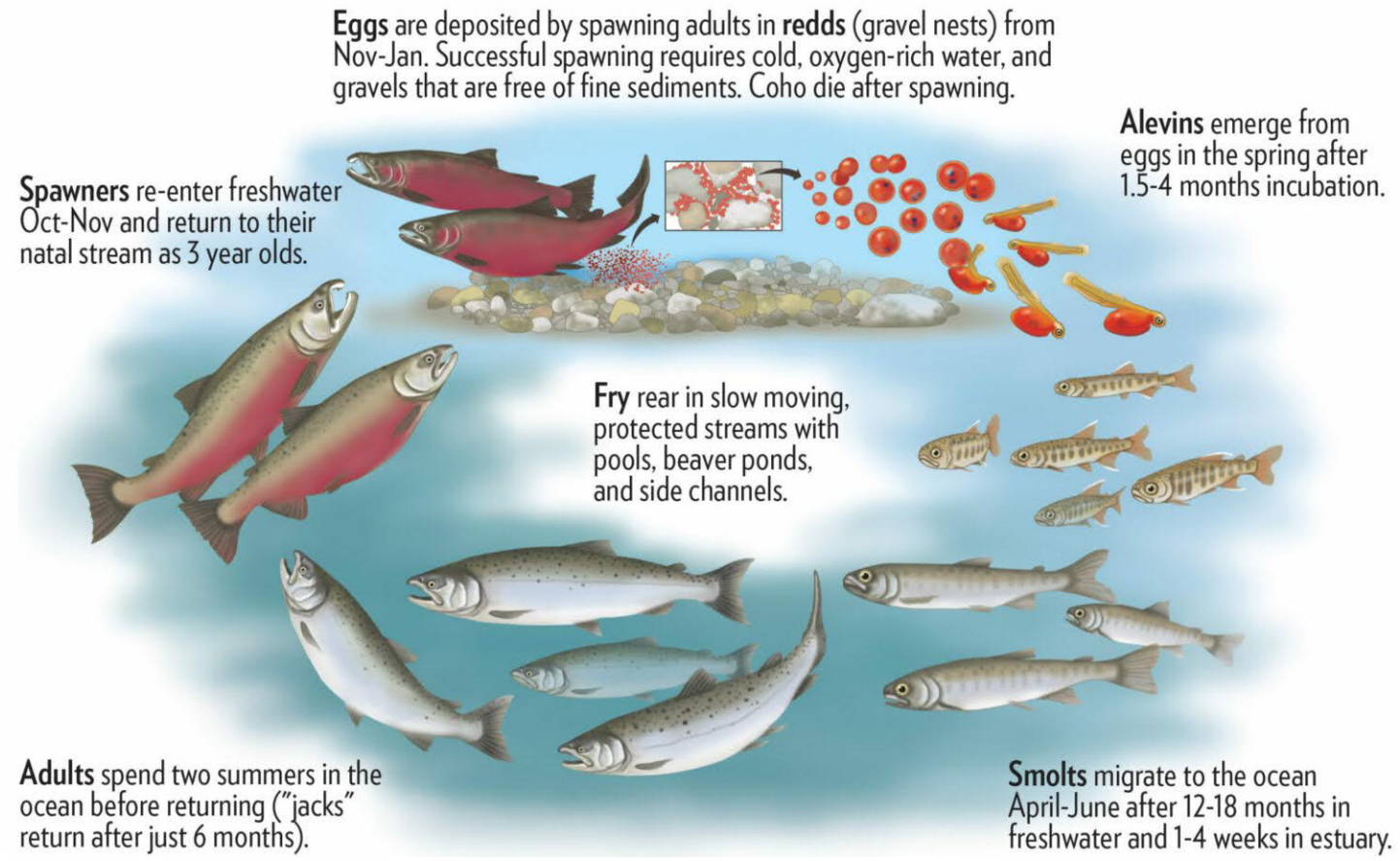


Figure 5. Coho Lifecycle. Morales, Elizabeth. Coho Salmon. n.d. Accessed April 7, 2026.

2.2. Salmon Habitat Needs and Restoration Strategies

While all Pacific salmon share core traits such as hatching and rearing in freshwater, migrating to the ocean to grow, and returning to their natal streams to spawn and die, each species has distinct timing, habitat use, and life-history strategies (Figure 5). Across species, salmon rely on a broad range of freshwater and estuarine habitats, including tributary streams, intermittent channels, mainstem rivers, lakes, off-channel wetlands, and brackish estuaries.

Over the past century, logging, agriculture, urbanization, channelization, wetland loss, and climate-driven changes have reduced or degraded many of these habitats. These alterations have straightened streams, disconnected floodplains, drained estuaries, and diminished cold-water and off-channel refuges (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2007; Tillamook Bay Watershed Coho Collaborative, 2026). Salmonids on the Oregon Coast lack sufficient high-quality overwinter and summer rearing habitat[11]. Juveniles require complex, slow-water environments that provide refuge during and support growth. Oregon Deparment of Fish and Wildlife identifies features such as large wood, deep pools, connected off-channel alcoves, beaver ponds, lakes, and floodplain wetlands as key components of "stream complexity," a common limiting factor across basins (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2007). Effective recovery requires restoring and maintaining enough high-quality, well-connected habitat to sustain viable salmon populations.

There are a number of ways that restoration projects aim to create these conditions. Restoration strategy is typically determined by the geomorphic conditions of the streams that are identified for restoration. Core approaches include:

Large wood placement (LWD): Strategic placement of large pieces of natural wood in streams increases instream complexity by recreating conditions that form deep pools, slow high-flows, reconnect streams with their floodplains, retain spawning gravel. ODFW guidelines recommend 320 pieces and 50 key pieces[12], which are larger and used to lock in a structure, per mile (Jones et al., 2014). A primary implementation challnge to LWD projects is sourcing sufficient and appropriately sized large wood, which is expensive and limited in availability.

Beaver conservation and beaver-mimicking structures: Beaver dams create slow-water, off-channel, and seasonally connected habitats that provide refuge and abundant food for salmon throughout their freshwater lifecycle. Projects can include beaver forage enhancement and construction of structures that mimic beaver dams.

Floodplain and tidal reconnection: Tidal reconnection strategies include restoring floodplain and wetlands associated with mainstem rivers which allows water to spread across the landscape and create refuge habitat. These projects look like removing levees, drainage ditches, and tidegates and re-meandering channelized rivers. Restoration projects of this type often completely transform the landscape and can be challenging for continued agricultural production.

Riparian restoration: Enhancing riparian (streamside) habitat improves water quality, moderates

11 Rearing habitat is another word for nursery or juvenile habitat. For salmon, this consists of freshwater streams, wetlands, and estuaries where juvenile salmon (fry and parr) live, feed, and grow before migrating to the ocean.

12 A key piece is a functional piece of natural wood that is large enough to contribute to formation of a stable snag that alters flows and channel form. Diameters tend to be equal or greater than half the bankfull or effective discharge depth and have a rootwad or multiple stems (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers & U.S. Department of the Interior, 2015)



Figure 6. Floodplains, Siletz Wildlife Refuge Bay, Holden Films, 2024



Figure 7. Example of large wood installation. Starr Creek, Mid-Coast Watershed Council, 2024.

stream temperatures, promotes large-wood recruitment (trees naturally falling), and improves sediment retention necessary for spawning beds (Coast Coho Partnership, n.d.-a). Restoration actions include removing invasive plants, re-establishing native vegetation, and excluding livestock.

Fish passage improvements: Physical barriers block migration of juvenile and adult salmon from essential habitat. Fish passage enhancement removes or modifies barriers such as culverts, tide gates, levees, and dams to allow salmon passage.

Long-term habitat protection: Long-term habitat protection of large refuge areas is essential to ensure that restoration work is not lost to land-use conversion or new sources of degradation.

2.3 HCP Aquatic Conservation Strategy & Project Selection

The HCP's aquatic conservation strategy is focused on reducing or replacing the watershed processes that are altered by timber harvest and other ODF activities. The HCP's conservation strategy, and the aquatic benefits of its core approaches, is described in greater detail in Appendix D. Their strategy includes four major actions:

Riparian Conservation Areas (RCA): RCAs are buffers around streams where harvest is not permitted. Approximately 35,000 acres are proposed to be designated.

Habitat Conservation Areas (HCA): HCAs are large blocks of forest managed to maintain late-seral structure stands. This means that only minimal timber harvest, and no clear cutting, is allowed. There are 275,000 acres of proposed HCAs. RCAs and HCAs make up 43% of the permit area.

Stream improvement projects: Over the 70 year permit term, ODF will be required to complete 440 instream improvement projects, on average 5-7 projects per year

The Conservation Fund: The HCP establishes the Conservation Fund to pay for restoration activities. It is funded by a percentage of each timber sale which is estimated to generate $1 million a year. $325,000 annually will be allocated for aquatic restoration projects, to be paid directly from the Conservation Fund.

This project aims to address the barriers that ODF faces to implementing high-impact, partner based restoration projects. To understand these barriers, Table 2 compares the HCP's intended project-selection framework with how ODF is currently able to implement restoration under its operational and regulatory constraints.

HCP Project Selection Framework	ODF Implementation Reality (Constraints and Behavior)
Prioritize partner-led projects identified in local, state, and federal planning documents, including Coast Coho's Strategic Action Plans	ODF tends to implement lowercost, timber sale adjacent projects because they align with existing harvest schedules, avoid long permitting processes, and fit within current staff capacity. Partner led SAP projects require more lead time, coordination, and permitting, and are often proposed outside of areas where ODF already has planned operations.
Provide access, sites, and materials to support SAP Implementation, either in contributions from the Conservation Fund or as in-kind wood and labor donations.	ODF can contribute wood or limited funding to these types of partner projects, but access and site support depend on timbersale timing and location. ODF's ability to provide large wood is dependent on the location and cost to store and transport large wood when harvest and project sites don't align.
Use best available science, watershed-scale modeling, and ODFW habitat and fish distribution data.	Science informs ODF's work, but limited staff capacity and the logistic need to align projects with scheduled timber sales means that projects aren't necessarily completed on priority stream reaches or in priority basins identified by basin scale strategic planning and modelling.
Project priority is given to projects that build on previous in-stream work and address multiple limiting factors.	ODF can often support this criterion, but opportunities to build on prior work or address multiple limiting factors depend on whether restoration aligns with timber sale timing, access, and available materials.
Compliance measured through percent of Conservation Funds spent annually	The $325,000 annual Conservation Fund is not enough to ensure the more complex, costly, higher impact work envisioned in SAPs. A spending based compliance metric risks incentivising lower cost, timber sale-adjacent projects.

Table 2. Western State Forest HCP Project Selection Criterion and ODF's Implementation Reality

While the HCP outlines ideal project selection criteria, recent conversations in March 2026 with ODF and NOAA highlight why the agency has historically relied on timber-sale adjacent projects, and indicate that ODF will likely continue to do so without a clear and incentivised framework to do otherwise. Timber-sale projects are straightforward to implement, can be written directly into timber sale contracts, and avoid the lengthy and costly permitting processes required for stand-alone restoration projects, such as DSL and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approvals. With limited staff capacity and funding, ODF must often prioritize projects that fit within their existing operational capacity, even when those projects are not located in the highest-priority Coho streams. In contrast, partner-driven projects require more coordination, more permitting, and more resources than ODF has available. Timber-sale projects are not inherently bad, they create habitat and can improve local conditions, but they aren't emblematic of the higher-impact, watershed-scale outcomes achieved through partner-led restoration. Despite ODF's genuine intent to do high-quality work, its limited budget, GPV obligations, and structural constraints make it especially vulnerable to a system that leads to easier, lower-cost harvest related projects over high ecological impact.

Although the HCP's conservation strategy largely represents an improvement to the management of Oregon's State forestland, it is shaped by compromises and continues to be limited by ODF's structural and operational constraints. The HCP is designed to prevent the local extinction of the covered endangered and threatened species, but is not intended to be a forest-wide recovery plan. The HCP will ultimately allow for continued clear cutting of over half of state forest land. While this is a slight reduction to

what they had previously been allowed to harvest, many Oregonians would like to see less focus on timber production and more emphasis on carbon sequestration, drinking water, or recreation. There are some large actions that represent wins for habitat conservation, such as protecting 43% of the permit area from high impact timber harvest through RCAs and HCAs. If stream restoration projects are strategically selected, ODFs project commitment will have a meaningful impact on aquatic species in the permit area.

2.4 Coast Coho Partnership Strategic Action Plans

ODF's restoration work is constrained by their structural and operational reality; basin-scale plans and tools are essential for identifying where high-impact, partner-supported projects are feasible. Coast Coho Partnership's Strategic Action Plans provide this; they offer ODF a practical way to identify high-value projects, justify basin priorities internally, and align restoration with long-range harvest planning.

CCP's SAPs use a partner-based approach to guide basin planning and long-term visioning; they integrate local ecological knowledge, longstanding partnerships, and scientific assessments to identify focal restoration areas and projects. Although the HCP covers multiple salmonids and eulachon, SAPs focus on Coho recovery specifically. Coho are an indicator species for ecosystem health; restoring the processes and habitats for Coho improves conditions for all aquatic HCP-covered species (Tillamook Bay Watershed Coho Collaborative, 2026). A detailed description of SAP development, prioritization models, and basin-scale planning processes is provided in Appendix E. Completed, underway, and proposed SAPs are shown in Figure 8; they cover 73.82% of the HCP permit area. This means that SAPs have effectively identified priorities across the majority of the HCPs permit landscape. Throughout their 70-year HCP term, ODF has the opportunity to utilize the SAPs' comprehensive partner-based strategic planning to identify high-quality, strategically planned restoration work in order to satisfy their aquatic project restoration requirements.

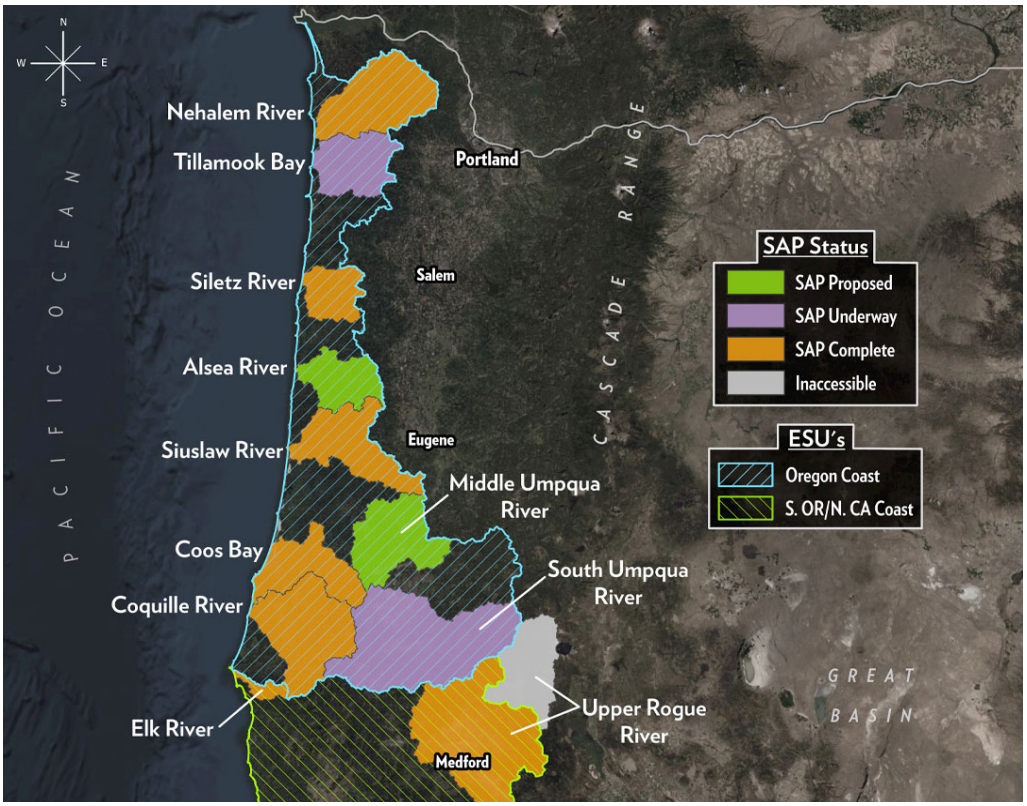


Figure 8. Status of Coast Coho Partnership Strategic Action Plans. Coast Coho Partnership. "Watershed Plans." Coast Coho Partnership, 2025.

Section 3

Strategic Restoration Framework

3.1 Recommendations for Incentivising and Enabling High-Impact Projects

The state owns two of the most important watersheds for salmon recovery and under the HCP will now carry a formal restoration obligation. As of March 2026, NOAA and ODF are still working to define how project crediting[13], compliance, and selection will function under the HCP. The HCP is in its final approval stages, the recommendations presented here are not intended to change the HCP itself, or prescribe a specific project credit formula. Instead, this section offers planning recommendations to guide how ODF can prioritize, credit, and support high-impact salmon restoration projects on state forestlands while operating within their existing operational constraints.

Recommendation 1: Define project types and create a crediting system

Both NOAA and ODF are exploring how a project credit system can drive broader ecological impact, several unresolved questions shape this discussion. NOAA needs to ensure that whatever crediting framework emerges ties directly to mitigation: restoration required cannot exceed the level of take ODF incurs. These issues reflect the challenge of designing a system that is both ecologically rigorous and operationally feasible. Very few public agencies that manage large forests have HCPs that implement a project crediting and mitigation strategy similar to Oregon's HCP. There are partial analogs (Washington DNR State Trust Lands HCP, Washington DNR Forest Practices HCP, Yolo County, California HCP), but none of these HCPs include a project-based crediting system. As a result, Oregon is effectively designing a system without strong precedents.

A key sticking point is the absence of a clear definition of what counts as a "project." There is no single physical or monetary criterion that reliably distinguishes a high-quality project from a minimal one. Any crediting system that measures only dollars spent or number of projects completed risks treating low-impact actions as equivalent to high-impact ones. Under such a system, ODF could meet its obligation by completing several inexpensive projects rather than investing in a single, more expensive project with a greater ecological benefit. Habitat credits need to reflect the value, cost, and effort of a project in order to incentivise high-impact restoration. To do this, ODF should be held to a project crediting system that accounts for the following supportive actions.

Supporting Action 1: Establish minimum standards for timber sale associated projects

Because of ODFs existing structural constraints and competing priorities, timber-sale associated projects dominate ODF's restoration work, largely because they are internal, programmatic, and often do not require the permitting, design work, or partner coordination that higher-impact projects demand. These projects occur within the contracts and boundaries of existing timber sales; they are usually implemented by the timber sale purchasers crews. When timber sales are purchased, contractors have a 2-3 year harvest window. This means that restoration work isn't scheduled until about 6 months before the contractor ultimately harvests. This structure makes timber-sale projects operationally efficient, but it limits their impact. Sale boundaries constrain which stream reaches can be treated, and the short planning window prevents ODF from partnering or securing external funding for more complex work.

Timber-sale projects must meet a baseline ecological threshold to ensure they contribute meaningfully to recovery. Setting standards, such as requiring a minimum level of habitat complexity, prioritizing sale units that overlap with SAP-identified focal areas, or elevating timber-sale projects that incorporate partner input, would prevent minimal actions from being credited equivalently to higher-impact work.

13 A project crediting system refers to the method NOAA and ODF will use to quantify, track, and verify the ecological value of ODF's stream-improvement work so that completed projects collectively meet the mitigation required for the incidental take ODF incurs.

Supporting Action 2: Prioritize Projects in Habitat Conservation Areas and SAP-Identified Priority Basins

SAPs identify focal reaches, anchor habitats, and stronghold basins where restoration yields the greatest ecological return. HCAs similarly represent areas where the HCP anticipates long-term habitat improvement. Prioritizing projects in these locations, through additional credit, or elevated project tiers, could ensure that ODF's restoration work aligns with watershed-scale recovery strategies rather than opportunistic implementation.

Sample Crediting System

A credit system could be structured by impact tiers with weighted credit accociated with each level; tiers would account for SAP-alignment, partner collaboration, project type, and complexity of work. Under a model such as this one, ODF would meet its quota not by completing a fixed number of projects or spending a certain dollar amount, but by accruing a required number of credits that reflect the cumulative value of its work. For example:

Tier 1: High-Impact Projects

Characterised by high ecological benefit, usually require design, permitting, and partner coordination, often outside timber sales, often requiring helicopter wood placement or major equipment. Examples include, full channel reconstruction, floodplain reconnection, barrier removal that opens significant habitat, or multireach LWD restoration in SAP identified anchor/stronghold areas.

Tier 2: Moderate-Impact Projects

SAP-identified, but could be feasible within timber sale areas. Examples include: Moderate complexity LWD projects (to be defined by number of pieces within a certain stream distance), riparian planting, side channel reconnection, small barrier removal

Tier 3: Low-Impact Projects

Usually lower cost, easy to implement, likely bundled into timber sales. Examples could include: low-complexity large wood placements (to be defined by number of pieces within a certain stream distance) or small riparian plantings.

Recommendation 2: Create a mechanism for partial credit or supplemental credit for ODF contributions to partner-led projects

High-impact restoration projects typically require funding and technical capacity that exceed what ODF can contribute on its own. Without a mechanism that recognizes collaborative work and allows ODF to receive full or partial credit for projects where it contributes wood, in-kind labor, or other support, the agency is effectively discouraged from participating in the highest value restoration opportunities on their land.

Many organizations working in these basins (Watershed Councils, local partnerships such as Tillamook Estuary Partnership, etc.) often implement high-quality restoration work on ODF lands. Although ODF is generally supportive of this work occurring, it has been unwilling to partner on it (through tree contribution, in-kind staff time) because it cannot currently receive project credit from partnered work. Watershed Councils, which rely heavily on State funding, are frequently required to buy restoration wood from ODF, resulting in a circular and inefficient use of public funds.

A credit model that awarded additional points for in-kind contributions (wood, labor, technical support) would allow ODF to support partner-led projects while still receiving project credit proportional to its role. This approach would expand ODF's ability to participate in high-impact restoration, reduce inefficiencies in project funding, and better align the crediting system with the ecological outcomes the HCP is intended to achieve.

Recommendation 3: Use Conservation Fund dollars strategically and allow ODF to supplement mitigation spending with grant funding.

High-impact projects usually require funding that exceeds ODF's Conservation Fund capacity. Historically, NOAA has not allowed ODF to count projects towards their mitigation requirements that are not fully funded or implemented internally; this system exists to ensure that ODF alone mitigates the take that their actions incur. In practice, this requirement prevents ODF from participating or contributing towards projects that are designed by local partners and rely on competitive state and federal

grants. ODF should receive credit proportional to their work for projects supported with external grant funding. Leveraging external funding would expand ODF's ability to support and implement larger, more complex restoration projects.

HCP Conservation Fund dollars should be reserved for projects that are not competitive for external grants. ODF and partners can secure grant funding for competitive projects; ODF should use Conservation Funds to support important but less fundable work.

Recommendation 5: Implement a wood-banking strategy

Project partners require substantial amounts of large wood for instream restoration; about 4,000 key pieces[14] of wood will be needed over the next four to five years. Local partners often use log salvage, wood banking programs to collect ready-to-use stores of wood. Log salvage programs collect trees that fall during storms or are removed for land-use purposes. This wood is generally unsuitable for lumber, so these programs collect, sort, and store salvaged trees to create a reliable and sustainable source of wood for future restoration projects. When needed, wood is transported to project locations either by truck or helicopter. The MidCoast Watershed Council has an existing log salvage program servicing the Siletz, Yaquina, and Alsea watersheds. The Tillamook Coho Collaborative is similarly launching a log salvage program at the Port of Tillamook Bay.

ODF's ability to contribute wood is one of the most valuable ways the agency can support high-impact projects. Current operational constraints limit when and how wood can be made available; ODFs wood supply is largely tied to their timber sales. Not every timber sale produces usable wood for in-stream restoration, contracted timber harvests happen within a fairly large (2-3 year) window, making it difficult to anticipate when wood will become available, and transporting wood away from timber harvest sites can be costly. Wood must be stored in a secure, visibly concealed location to prevent the public from taking or damaging the wood (usually for firewood).

Rather than implementing their own wood storage system, ODF can partner with existing programs to store and donate wood. When appropriate, ODF can contribute logs to these programs and receive HCP credit for their contribution. ODF lacks dedicated funding to transport wind-felled or ice-damaged trees to centralized storage sites. ODF staff noted that a log-salvage hauling fund would make a significant difference, but current Conservation Fund dollars are tightly tied to specific HCP eligible projects and may not be flexible enough to support wood salvage operations. Permitting Conservation Fund allocations to be used for a wood banking program would help implement this recommendation.

Ideally, ODF would also commit a fixed percentage of timber from each sale to their wood bank. Operationally, a percentage donated is likely not feasible unless it were added to the HCP commitments. However, if ODF establishes their own or a partnered location for wood banking, and they receive project credit for donated wood, they may be incentivized to begin committing fixed percentages of timber sales to a wood banking program.

Managing a project crediting system that accounts for value, cost, and effort, along with managing Conservation Fund allocations and implementing a wood banking program, may pose operationally complex. WSC is well positioned to support the development and implementation of a holistic system. The adoption of the HCP later this year will represent a transformative change to how ODF has historically managed state forestland. As NOAA and ODF negotiate this system; right now is a good time to consider ODF's operational barriers and create a culture change that systemically prioritizes quality stream restoration work.

14 A key piece is a functional piece of natural wood that is large enough to contribute to formation of a stable snag that alters flows and channel form. Diameters tend to be equal or greater than half the bankfull or effective discharge depth and have a rootwad or multiple stems (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers & U.S. Department of the Interior, 2015)

3.2 Recommendations for Selecting Future Projects

The 2026 - 2031 Project Work Plan included in this project identifies partner-based projects for only the first five years of restoration work under the HCP; the HCP spans a 70-year permit term. To ensure that ODF is able to implement and support meaningful, partner-driven projects throughout the life of the permit, a consistent and transparent method for identifying future project suites is needed. Based on the existing project review process, and informed by ODF's operational planning process, the following framework identifies challenges, presents recommendations and describes a potential workflow and communication structure for selecting future restoration project suites on ODF-managed lands.

Recommendation 1. Strengthen ODF's operational capacity for partner-led projects

ODF lacks internal capacity to evaluate, coordinate, and support partner-led restoration. An additional ODF fisheries restoration biologist would be the biggest way that ODF could expand their operational capacity. Currently, ODF's aquatic and riparian specialist is the primary reviewer for all partner projects. ODF routinely relies on support from ODFW to coordinate restoration work. ODF operation managers must approve any ODF contribution of trees, wood, or in-kind labor, and they require clear justification and early notice. Project approval requires alignment among aquatic specialists, operations managers, and district staff, all of whom rely on predictable timelines and basin-level planning. An additional dedicated staff role could help coordinate partner requests, shepherd projects through internal review, communicate basin priorities to partners, and ensure that project proposals are framed in ways that operations managers can support.

Recommendation 2. Develop a SAP-aligned, 10-year focal area prioritization plan parallel to ODF's implementation planning cycle

In April 2026, ODF staff emphasized that partner identified projects need to align with ODF's 10-year Implementation Plans in order to be feasible. ODF develops 10-year implementation plans that guide where harvest and associated operations will occur; these plans inform their annual operating plans (AOPs). When identified projects fall outside the basins identified in ODF's 10-year Implementation Plans, or when proposed projects occur within active clear-cuts and therefore lack ecological viability, ODF often cannot support them. ODF suggested that a SAP-aligned focal area prioritization plan paired with ODF's implementation cycle would significantly improve their ability to support partner-led restoration. This plan would:

- Identify priority focal basins for each 10-year period of the 70-year HCP
- Align those basins with ODF ownership patterns to determine highest ODF in-kind impact
- Give ODF a defensible rationale for focusing restoration in specific basins at specific times
- Allow partners advance planning time for project development, grant applications, and permitting

Recommendation 3. Establish a regular communication structure with basin partners

Partners indicate that increased guidance and communication with ODF would increase their ability to lead projects on ODF managed land. ODF indicates that partner proposed projects are often denied because they fail to align with ODF's operational planning. Quarterly coordination meetings between ODF and basin partners should be established to communicate basin priorities and upcoming operational windows, review ongoing projects, identify emerging opportunities, initiate the approval process for future project suites, flag permitting and survey needs early.

Recommendation 4. Provide clear partner expectations and a predictable process

Historically, partners have had to complete an intake application and undergo an ODF project review process (Appendixes F-H) to complete restoration projects on ODF managed land. This system is not clearly defined and has not been consistently implemented in recent years, but ODF indicates that they plan to resume use of a partner-project application system following the HCP approval. Partners need a transparent and predictable process for proposing projects on ODF land. For ODF, last minute project requests are rarely operationally feasible. Partners need a formalized and published project proposal timeline, list of required forms, expectations for pre-application coordination, criteria for ODF contributions, and internal review steps. An example workflow is outlined below.

Example Partner-Project Workflow:

Step 1: Annual Project Indentification (Led by Partners)

Partners identify potential projects using SAP priorities, 10-year implementation plans, and internal review. Partners bring these concepts to quarterly ODF coordination meetings to begin early discussion.

Step 2: Pre-Application Coordination (more than 3 years before project implementation)

Partners consult with ODF's Aquatic & Riparian Specialist to:

- Confirm project location on ODF land
- Discuss feasibility, access, and potential ODF contributions
- Determine whether the project aligns with SAP priorities and HCP mitigation needs
- Identify whether surveys or federal consultation may be required

Step 3: Formal Project Intake (3 years before implementation, before September 1st)

Partners submit a Restoration Cooperator Project Request Form (Appendix F). Described ODF project involvement requests (e.g., in-kind labor, wood donation, etc.) can be used by ODF to calculate HCP project credits. Details needed include:

- Partner description and objectives
- Maps
- Proposed actions and access routes
- Requested ODF contributions
- Permitting needs and timeline
- Partner roles and funding strategy

Step 4: ODF Internal Review and Approval (3-6 months after submission)

ODF conducts a coordinated internal review of all partner-led projects. This review process is depicted in Appendix G. This review generally includes confirming policy compliance, aquatic benefit, coordination with ODFW, ability to include the project in AOPs, workload considerations, compatibility with recreation sites, and survey or consultation requirements. Consistent with ODF's existing review process, requested revisions to the project, or a "no" is possible at any point is possible. ODF will provide:

- A quarterly update on their review for all approved, denied, and under-review project applications at quarterly ODF-partner coordination meetings.
- Individual project summaries for applicants of their review, required project modifications, and feasibility of requested ODF contributions.
- For all approved projects, ODF will embed approved projects in their Annual Operating Plan, support preparation of permits, and provide letters of support for grant applications.

Step 5: Implementation Planning (After project approval, prior to implementation)

Partners complete all items on the Approved Partnership Project Implementation Checklist for ODF Managed State Forestlands (Appendix I). This includes obtaining necessary permits, scheduling a pre-operation meeting with ODF, fire season requirements established, and submitting finalized operational timeline.

Step 6: Implementation & Reporting

Projects are implemented, all clean-up and rehab are completed as agreed to, and ODF is notified of completion. ODF will review project work and provide a letter to the partner confirming that requirements have been met. All post-project reporting is completed. Project-level reporting provides the documentation needed for ODF's HCP implementation monitoring. Habitat and species monitoring outcomes are evaluated through the HCP's basin-scale and species-response monitoring programs led by ODF, NOAA, and ODFW. NOAA Fisheries retains enforcement authority for the HCP and the Incidental Take Permit, while ODF is responsible for demonstrating compliance and ensuring that partner-led projects meet permit requirements.

Section 4

Five-Year Strategic Work Plan 2026 - 2031

The following section highlights SAP-aligned partner-projects identified for the next five years capable of meeting ODF's restoration obligations under the HCP. This five-year work plan reflects the near-term window in which partner-led projects are already in early planning stages and can realistically be implemented within the first phase of the HCP. While the recommendations in this project outline a more strategic, basin-scale approach for identifying future projects, those structures will take time to develop and align with ODF's 10-year implementation planning cycle. The projects included below represent the best available set of SAP-aligned opportunities that can be advanced immediately while longer-range basin prioritization is being established.

The following method was used to identify these projects:

1. Projects identified in the Nehalem River, Tillamook Bay, Siletz River, Siuslaw River, and Coquille River SAPs were overlaid with ODF managed land; all projects found on ODF land were highlighted.
2. Highlighted projects were cross referenced with SAP's Near Term Work Plans to identify only projects scheduled for near term implementation
3. Implementing partners were asked to update and edit the project list for accuracy and to identify the specific forms of support ODF can provide (e.g. wood donation, technical support)

The resulting work plan consists of projects that 1) have been highlighted for near-term implementation in Coast Coho SAPs, 2) fall within ODF managed land, and 3) are being led by established local partners. These projects represent opportunities for ODF to support existing science-backed, partner-driven restoration already underway in early planning processes. Partner-identified ODF support requests (e.g. wood donation, technical support, etc.) can be tracked and credited towards ODF's HCP restoration obligation.

The 5-year work plan that this report outlines primarily utilizes the Nehalem River, Tillamook Bay, Siletz River, Siuslaw River, and Coquille River SAPs; the geography of these basins are described in greater detail in Appendix I. These five SAPs collectively cover 71.10% of the HCP Permit Area, and have been selected for analysis because of the high concentration of ODF land within their boundaries. The Coos Bay SAP has been excluded because it contains the Elliot State Forest, which is managed by a separate HCP. The majority, 66.33%, of the HCP permit area lies within the Nehalem and Tillamook SAP boundaries alone. For this reason, the bulk of the projects within the 5-year work plan fall within these basins.



Figure 9. Starr Creek Machinery, Mid-Coast Watershed Council, 2024

4.1 Schedule of Near-Term Restoration Projects

Basin	Sub Watershed	Restoration Project	Partner	Project Start				
				26-27	28-29	30-31	32-33	Un - sched-uled (≤5 yrs)
Nehalem	Beneke	Beneke Creek LWD & Riparian	UNWC					X
	Clear Creek	Clear Creek LWD & fish pas-sage	UNWC	X				
		Harliss Creek culvert removal	NBWC	X				
		East Fork Cook Creek LWD	NBWC					X
	Crooked	Oak Ranch LWD/Beaver	UNWC					X
	Fishhawk Creek	Fishhawk LWD & riparian	UNWC					X
	Foley Creek	East Fork Foley Creek LWD	NBWC					X
	Little Fish-hawk	Hamilton Creek LWD	UNWC					X
	Lower NF Nehalem	Coal Creek LWD	NBWC					X
		Little Rackheap Creek	NBWC		X			
		Big Rackheap Creek	NBWC		X			
	Mid N Fork Nehalem	Sweethome Mainline Road Decommission	NBWC					X
	Wolf Creek	Wolf Creek LWD	UNWC					X
Tillamook	Devils Lake Fork	Deyoe Creek	ODF			X		
	Little SF Kilchis	Sam Downs Cr.	TEP			X		
		Little SF Kilchis				X		
		Clear Cr.	TEP	X				
	NF Kilchis	NF Kilchis R.	TEP	X				
		Schroeder Cr.		X				
		Company Cr.				X		
	NF Wilson	WF NF Wilson R.	ODF			X		
	Upper Miami	Miami River	TEP	X				
		Trib to Upper Miami River		X				
	Upper Wilson	Cedar Cr.	ODF			X		
		NF Cedar Cr.				X		
Siletz	Little Rock Creek	Steer Creek	CTSI/MCWC	X				
Siuslaw	Green Creek - Lake Creek	Nelson Creek	SWC					X

Table 3. Schedule of SAP Identified Near-Term Projects on ODF land

4.2 Projects Descriptions by Sub-Basin

2026-2027									
Basin	**Sub-Watershed**	**Project Name**	**Restoration Type**	**Strategy**	**Total Miles**	**Wood Estimate (pieces)**	**Partner**	**ODF Match Request (eg. labor, wood)**	**Project Description**
Nehalem	Clear Creek	Clear Creek LWD & fish passage	LWD	Machine Felling	1.22		UNWC	none	Add 15 LWD to 1.2 miles of Clear Creek - Funded in-progress
	Cook	Harliss Creek culvert removal	Barrier Removal, Culvert	Machine Melling	0.10	5 structures, 15 pieces	NBWC	Wood, technical support, ODF gravel pit for materials disposal	Upgrade to a fish passable culvert and install 5 instream wood structures in .1 miles of Harliss Creek
Tillamook	Little SF Kilchis	Clear Cr.	LWD		2.36	120	TEP	Wood	Add LWD to 1 mile of Clear Creek
	NF Kilchis	NF Kilchis R.	LWD		7.54	700	TEP	Felling, wood, technical	Add LWD to 4.5 miles of NF Kilchis R. Sig. RBA #s
		Schroeder Cr.	LWD		2.30	Included in NF Kilchis R Estimates	TEP	Felling, wood, technical	
	Upper Miami	Miami River Basin Assessment	Designs		8.49		WSC	Technical assistance and road engineering	Upper Miami Restoration Designs to start in 2026, Restoration Phase 1 to start 2028 (4.5 miles) - A lot of potential. High priority. Road caving in on sections. A project would need a basin assessment

Table 4. SAP-Identified Project Descriptions and ODF Match Requests, 2026-2027

2028-2029									
Basin	**Sub-Watershed**	**Project Name**	**Restoration Type**	**Strategy**	**Total Miles**	**Wood Estimate (Trees)**	**Partner**	**ODF Match Request (eg. labor, wood)**	**Project Description**
Nehalem	Lower NF Nehalem	Little Rackheap Creek	Instream Complexity	M/F	0.25		NBWC	wood/tech support	Add LWD to .25 miles of Little Rackheap Creek anchor habitat #1.
		Big Rackheap Creek	Riparian Restoration		0.5		NBWC	Tech support	Treat Japanese Knotweed on 0.5 miles and plant riparian vegetation.
Tillamook	Upper Miami	Miami River Basin Restoration Phase I			4.5		WSC	TBD: most likely wood and road work	TBD project developed from Restoration Feasibility Assessment
Siletz	Little Rock Creek	Steer Creek	LWD		4.4		CTSI/MCWC		Add LWD to 3.3 miles of Little Rock Creek

Table 5. SAP-Identified Project Descriptions and ODF Match Requests, 2028-2029

2030-2031									
Basin	**Sub-Water-shed**	**Project Name**	**Restoration Type**	**Strategy**	**Total Miles**	**Wood Estimate (Trees)**	**Partner**	**ODF Match Request (eg. labor, wood)**	**Project Description**
Tillamook	Devils Lake Fork	Deyoe Creek	LWD		1.00	220	ODF		LWD to 1.8 mikes
	Little SF Kilchis	Sam Downs Cr.	LWD	TBD	2.16	650	TEP		LWD to 4.3 miles
		Little SF Kilchis	LWD	TBD	1.15	Included in Sam Downs Creek Project	TEP		
	NF Kilchis	Company Cr.	LWD	TBD	1.47	Included in Sam Downs Creek Project	TEP		
	NF Wilson	WF NF Wilson R.	LWD	TBD	4.52	400	ODF		LWD to 3.3 miles
	Upper Wil-son	Cedar Cr.	LWD	TBD	3.44	600	ODF		LWD to 4 miles
		NF Cedar Cr.	LWD	TBD	1.07	Included in Cedar Creek	TEP		

Table 6. SAP-Identified Project Descriptions and ODF Match Requests, 2030-2031

Unscheduled									
Basin	**Sub Watershed**	**Project Name**	**Restoration Type**	**Strategy**	**Total Miles**	**Wood Estimate (Trees)**	**Partner**	**ODF Match Request**	**Project Description**
Nehalem	Beneke	Beneke Creek LWD	LWD	H/M/F	4.06	30 LWD/100 trees	UNWC	wood/tech support	Add up to 30 LWD to 4.1 miles of Beneke/Bull Heifer - preliminary lay-out map on file
		Beneke Creek Riparian	Riparian	hand plant/ construct wooden protection structures	4.95	none	UNWC	none	Augment riparian plantings on 5 miles of Beneke tract of Jewel Meadows Wildlife Area - need field recon w/ODFW
	Cook	East Fork Cook Creek LWD	LWD	Helicopter, M/F	0.70		NBWC		Add LWD to East Fork Cook Creek from Anchor 1 - Anchor 2.
	Crooked	Oak Ranch LWD/Beaver	LWD	M/F		9 LWD/40 Trees	UNWC	wood/tech support	Add 19 LWD (9 ODF) to 1.7 miles of Oak Ranch and develop the restoration scope of work for 3 acres of beaver meadow downstream of LWD reach - preliminary lay-out map on file
	Fishhawk Creek	Fishhawk riparian	Riparian	hand plant/ protect	3.93		UNWC	none	Plant 3.9 miles of riparian vegetation on Fishhawk Creek - need door to door contact w landowners for agreement
		Fishawk LWD	LWD	M/F	1.28		UNWC	wood/tech support	Add 15+ LWD to 1.3 miles of Fishhawk and Boxler Creeks - need field recon
	Foley Creek	East Fork Foley Creek LWD	LWD	M/F	1		NBWC		Add LWD to 1 mile of East Fork Foley Creek in Anchor #1
	Little Fishhawk	Hamilton Creek LWD	LWD		2.85		UNWC	wood/tech support	Add 24 LWD to 2.9 miles Hamilton Creek - preliminary lay-out map on file
	Lower NF Nehalem	Coal Creek LWD	LWD	M/F	1.2		NBWC		Add LWD to 1.2 miles of Coal Creek starting in Anchor #3-#4 and Anchor #5

Nehalem (continued)	Mid N Fork Nehalem	Sweethome Mainline Road Decommission	LWD, Floodplain Reconnection, Road Decommission	M/F	2.87		NBWC		Decommission North Fork Road/Soapstone Mainline where it confines Sweethome Creek. Add LWD to restore floodplain interactions.
	Wolf Creek	Wolf Creek LWD	LWD	M/F	2.40		UNWC	wood/ tech support	Add 20 LWD to 2.4 miles of NF Wolf Creek - preliminary lay-out map on file
Siuslaw	Green Creek - Lake Creek	Nelson Creek	LWD	Helicopter	3.5	200	SWC	Wood	Add LWD to approx 3.5 miles of mainstem Nelson Creek, helicopter placement for entire reach

Table 7. SAP-Identified Project Descriptions and ODF Match Requests, Unscheduled

4. 3 Conclusion

This project considers the systems that need to be in place to facilitate and incentivise high-impact, partner-led, SAP-identified stream restoration project work under ODF's increased HCP aquatic project obligation. As Oregon moves toward HCP-based management across both private and state ownership, clear and replicable strategies for identifying high-impact stream restoration work will be essential. This project provides one such framework.

For NOAA, it provides recommendations for a robust stream restoration project crediting system. For ODF, it provides a 5-year work plan of existing partner-based restoration work occurring within their HCP permit area. The five-year work plan offers a practical starting point, while the proposed recommendations position ODF and its partners to identify and deliver increasingly strategic, partner-led projects over time. For ODF and local partners it outlines a predictable process for proposing and advancing high-impact projects throughout the 70-year permit term. Collectively, these recommendations address ODF's systemic, structural challenges and are contextualized by their conflicting operational priorities. More broadly, this project demonstrates how planners can utilize existing partner-based work to implement high-impact stream restoration projects.

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Appendix A

History of Board of Forestry and Department of State Lands

Board of Forestry/Council of Forest Trust Land

ODF manages 729,178 acres of BOF land; the Council of Forest Trust Land counties (CFTLC) have a protected interest in this land. CFTLC is formed by 15 counties in Oregon; these counties acquired forestland through tax foreclosure and voluntarily transferred the land to the State for timber management. These counties include: Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Douglas, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, and Washington Counties.

In the first decades of the 20th century, irresponsible timber harvest, fires linked to logging operations, and the economic collapse of the Great Depression led to widespread tax foreclosure on private forestlands across coastal western Oregon, transferring ownership to counties and ultimately forming the CFTLC (Council of Forest Trust Land Counties, n.d.). In the late 1930s, the timber industry used a practice called "cut and run" in which they harvested trees as quickly as possible, and then abandoned the land without replanting. Counties reclaimed abandoned, harvested land through tax foreclosure proceedings.Wildfires, most notably a series of fires referred to as the Tillamook Burn, also resulted in a huge amount of forestland transferring to county ownership through tax-foreclosure.

The first fire of the Tillamook Burn occurred in August 1933 and burned 240,000 acres of mostly old growth forest. More fires in subsequent years continued to burn the same area as well as unburnt forest around it. By 1945, 355,000 acres had been burned. The Tillamook Burn was neither the first nor the only notable series of fires; nearly 80,000 acres were burned in Lane County between 1917 and 1922 as well (Tillamook Bay Watershed Coho Collaborative, 2026). These fires were largely a result of timber operations. The majority of the burned land was privately owned, after the fires, the land was abandoned by owners and foreclosed and transferred into ownership of their respective counties.

County	FY 2025
Benton	$201,075
Clackamas	$107,962
Clatsop	$18,707,213
Columbia	$2,258,795
Coos	$0
Douglas	$331,122
Josephine	$0
Klamath	$631,176
Lane	$2,216,434
Lincoln	$1,100,372
Linn	$2,242,458
Marion	$287,440
Polk	$287,581
Tillamook	$20,686,413
Washington	$7,302,681
Total	**$56,360,722**

Table 8. County Share of Revenue from Board of Forestry Lands. Association of Oregon Counties, and Oregon Department of Forestry. Council of Forest Trust Lands Counties Annual Report. n.d. Accessed March 25, 2026.

Counties owned all of the tax-delinquent foreclosure land in-fee, so the land didn't generate any revenue through taxes. These rural counties were dependent on property taxes, and neared bankruptcy (Council of Forest Trust Land Counties, n.d.).

The State Forest Acquisition Act of 1939 provided a general mechanism that allowed states to acquire tax-delinquent forestlands from counties to be held in trust by the State (ORS.530.010). The Forest Acquisition Act of 1941 addressed the massive rehabilitation needs of the lands acquired; it required the BOF to replant the forests, and when timber was harvestable, the BOF and counties would share revenues generated through harvest; 63% to counties and 36% to the BOF (Association of Oregon Counties & Oregon Department of Forestry, 2025). The 1941 Act required that BOF management secure "the greatest permanent value of such lands to the state," this language is still

present in Oregon's Greatest Permanent Value Rule[15] (ORS 530.050). It took time for the land to generate revenue, many of the trees were not of harvestable age and many that were continued to catch fire. After massive reforestation efforts, the first ODF timber sale on Tillamook Burn CFTLC land occurred in 1983. Today, much of CFTLC-represented state forests consist of relatively young stands between 30-80 years old (Tillamook Bay Watershed Coho Collaborative, 2026).

The 15 CFTLC counties generally allocate 60% of their revenue to schools, 23% to various special districts, and 17% for their own expenses (Association of Oregon Counties & Oregon Department of Forestry, 2025). In 2025, ODF generated $93.5 million in net revenue from harvest across BOF land; $56.4 million was distributed to the CFTLC member counties (Association of Oregon Counties & Oregon Department of Forestry, 2025). Table 8 shows the amount distributed to each member county.

Department of State Lands/Common School Forest Lands

DSL forestlands (managed by ODF) are also called Common School Forest Lands (CSFL); revenue generated from all DSL land, including the CSFL, contributes to the Common School Fund (CSF) to help fund Oregon's schools. When Oregon became a state in 1859, the federal government granted 3.5 million acres of grazing and forestland to the state to be used for the benefit of schools (Council of Forest Trust Land Counties, n.d.). Most of this land was sold, DSL maintains ownership of 681,000 acres today, 25,826 acres of which constitute the CSFL, managed by ODF (Oregon Department of State Lands, 2025). ODF is also required to manage CSFL consistent with Oregon's Greatest Permanent Value Rule. In 2025, $76.8 million went to Oregon's K-12 schools from the CSF, $2.75 million of this was revenue from CSFL (Oregon Department of State Lands & Oregon Department of Forestry, 2025). All of Oregon's 197 public school districts receive annual CSF distributions, proportional to the number of students served.

15 The interpretation of the GPV has been contested, most significantly by a coalition of CFTLC member counties. In 2019, Linn County, financed by large timber companies, sued the State arguing that state law mandated more intensive logging of state forests and that the State breached their contractual obligation under the GPV rule by failing to manage the forestlands so as to maximize revenue. In 2022, courts agreed, and awarded member counties over $1 billion in lost revenue. The Oregon Court of Appeals reversed the verdict two months later, clarifying that the State has the discretion to prove that their management practices are balanced across the benefits described in the GPV rule. This case clarified that the GPV rule specifically identifies multiple values and that the State does not need to elevate logging over the other values defined.

Appendix B

The Western State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan

A Habitat Conservation Plan is a planning document prepared to help land managers and owners meet the rules of the federal Endangered Species Act while allowing for certain covered activities (e.g. timber harvest, development, road management). By nature, these activities result in harm to endangered species and their habitat (this harm to endangered species is referred to as "take"). Landowners must develop an HCP in order to obtain an Incidental Take Permits from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, which allows a specified level of incidental harm to the species included in the plan. ITPs provide landowners with legal protection under the Endangered Species Act by authorizing a defined level of incidental harm, as long as they acknowledge those impacts and implement the mitigation measures outlined in their HCP.

In November 2017, the Oregon Board of Forestry directed Oregon Department of Forestry staff to explore options to achieve financial viability while increasing conservation outcomes, including the pursuit of a programmatic Endangered Species Act compliance tool such as a Habitat Conservation Plan (Oregon Board of Forestry et al., 2017). Per the Greatest Permanent Value Rule, ODF is legally obligated to harvest timber, manage roads through their lands, and build and maintain recreational facilities in state forests; they are also required to comply with the ESA. HCPs are a common tool to manage these conflicting priorities. ODF ultimately developed the Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan which was approved by the Board of Forestry and advanced to federal partners for final approval in March of 2024.When adopted, the HCP will define the conservation commitments required for ODF to obtain federal Incidental Take Permits, allowing the agency to continue managing and harvesting state forestland while meeting ESA requirements.

Until the draft Western Oregon State Forests HCP is formally adopted, ODF continues to comply with the ESA through a process called "take avoidance." Under the take avoidance approach, ODF must conduct extensive surveying to prove each year and in every harvest unit that their actions will not take a listed species. ESA protections depend on where species are detected in any given year; this approach moves the footprint of protected areas around - if a protected animal is detected in an area, it becomes protected, if surveys later fail to detect the species, the area may lose protection. These shifting protected areas can derail harvest plans late in their process, making annual revenue unpredictable for ODF and the counties that depend on timber revenue. ODF and the BOF argue that the take avoidance approach creates a reactive, project-by-project compliance system that creates a patchwork of temporary, shifting buffers, rather than stable habitat blocks and a landscape-level conservation strategy (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022). Adoption of the HCP provides ODF legal protection and safety that is critical for effective management of state forestland.

The following are descriptions of the federal and state laws that enable the HCP process and mandate ODFs conduct as both a landowner and state agency:

Endangered Species Act of 1973

The ESA is a U.S. law protecting imperiled species and their habitats from extinction as a consequence of economic growth and development. It authorizes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) to list species as threatened or endangered, prohibits "take" of them, and mandates consultation to avoid jeopardizing listed species (Endangered Species Act of 1973, 1973). The term "take" describes the act of harassing, harming, wounding, and killing threatened or endangered species (NOAA Fisheries, 2022). Two-thirds of federally listed species have at least some habitat on private, economically productive land, as such, the USFWS has developed tools and incentives to protect private interest while encouraging conservation management. In 1982, the ESA was amended to add an exemption for the incidental "take" of listed species by non-federal landowners for certain compliant land uses. The ITP protects and authorizes ODF in take that may occur during the implementation of covered activities such as timber harvest. Covered species must have a range that overlaps with the HCP permit area, be currently or likely to become listed under the ESA during the

HCP permit term, be likely to be impacted by covered activities, and have enough data available to assess impact to the species from covered activities to create a conservation strategy that will adequately avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impact of any take of the species that occurs from covered activities. In order to apply for an ITP, non-federal entities must develop a conservation plan that meets specific requirements as identified in the ESA, this most often takes the form of a Habitat Conservation Plan. The HCP is submitted to NOAA Fisheries and the USFWS for technical assistance and for review under the National Environmental Policy Act for analysis and public review (Endangered Species Act of 1973, 1973).

National Environmental Policy Act

Enacted in 1970, NEPA is the national policy for the environment; it requires Federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of proposed major federal actions prior to making decisions (NEPA, n.d.). This review must be completed before ODF's HCP can be approved and ITPs can be issued to ODF. NEPA provides the framework for evaluating the HCP, including an analysis of alternative strategies and environmental impact. It also requires a public notice, comment, and consideration of public interest.

Appendix C

Indigenous Peoples

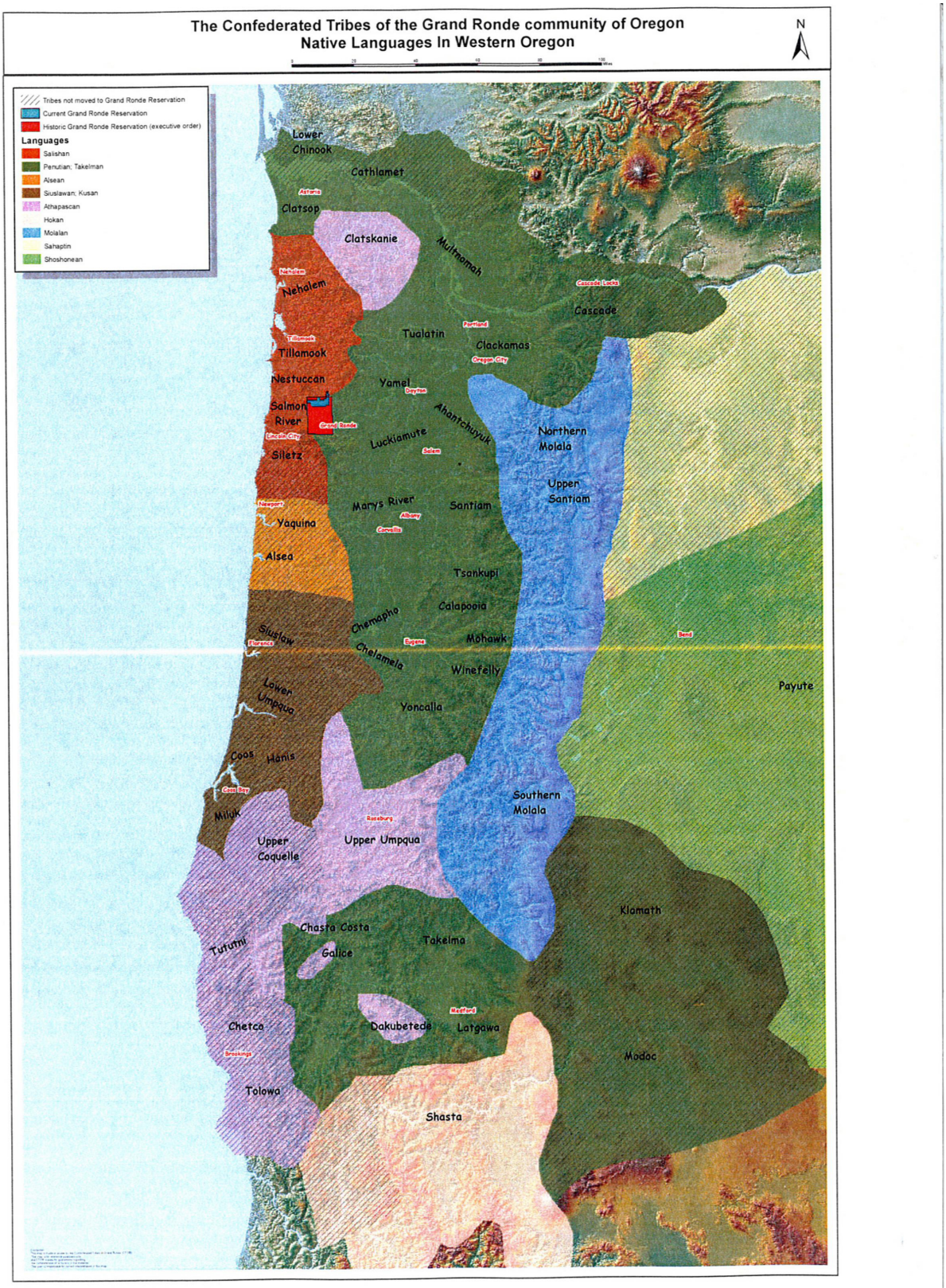


Figure 10. The Confederation Tribes of the Grande Ronde community of Oregon Native Languages in Western Oregon. Oregon Department of Education. "Oregon Department of Education : Tribal Curriculum : American Indian/Alaska Native Education : State of Oregon." 2017.

The Oregon Coast has long been home to dozens of distinct Indigenous nations, each with their own languages, governance systems, and relationships to place. These groups included the Miluk and Hanis Coos, Siuslaw, Lower Umpqua, Alsea, Yaquina, Siletz-area bands, Tillamook, Nehalem, Nestucca, Salmon River peoples, and many more. Figure 10 depicts the many languages across western Oregon.

Between 1780 and 1850, it is estimated that 97% of Oregon's Indigenous population died due to introduced diseases including smallpox, malaria, measles, influenza, cholera, and typhoid fever (Robert Boyd, n.d.). Early colonial explorers and non-Indigenous furtrappers began frequenting the Oregon Coast in 1792; by this time many Indigenous populations had already been severely depleted from earlier introduced epidemics, such as the 1781 smallpox epidemic (Landis, 2020).

By the mid-1800s, the tribes of western Oregon were forced to sign eight treaties with the U.S. federal government, ceding approximately 15 million acres of land (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, n.d.). Treaty making on the Oregon Coast was inconsistent, coercive, and many of the commitments made to Indigenous peoples were never honored. Beginning in the mid-1800s, the U.S. federal government forcibly removed Indigenous coastal peoples from their homelands. Distinct tribes and bands were moved to reservations where they were forced to live together despite their different languages, dialects, ways of life, and cultures (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, n.d.). By 1880, Oregon had six reservations, two that the Indigenous peoples on the West Coast were forced to - the Siletz and Grande Ronde reservations. These moves were violent and non-voluntary; they disrupted governance, cultural continuity, land stewardship, and resulted in the deaths of many Indigenous peoples.

By the late 1850s, many chronic introduced diseases were prevalent on reservations; life on Oregon's reservations is described as marked by starvation, disease, violence, and poverty (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, n.d.). Between 1865 and 1875 the federal government opened huge portions of multiple reservations to white, colonial settlement, reducing the size of the Siletz Reservation in particular by 900,000 acres, about 75% of the original reservation (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, n.d.; Native Lands and Reservations, Maps, n.d.). The General Allotment Act (also known as the Dawes Act) in 1887 allotted 160 acres parcels to Indigenous individuals or families on reservations to be held in trust by the federal government. The federal government agreed to transfer deeds after 25 years, or after 5 years if Indigenous owners could demonstrate fluency in English; the majority of allotted land was ultimately transferred out of Indigenous ownership. The Dawes Act served as an extension of federal policy that aimed to assimilate and erase Indigenous identity, culture, and life. Allotment broke up communal ownership and management of Tribal lands and resources (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, n.d.). Many allotments were ultimately sold or transferred without pay to non-Indigenous people, further reducing the size of Oregon's reservations and removing ownership and management of land from Indigenous peoples.

Today's federally recognized Tribes represent the descendants of many confederated, independent Tribes. Of Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes, six include peoples whose ancestral homelands are in western Oregon, including:

- Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians
- Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
- Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians
- Coquille Indian Tribe
- Klamath Tribes

Salmon has long been more than just a food source for the Indigenous peoples of western Oregon, it is a foundation of cultural identity, ceremonial life, health, subsistence, and trade. For tribes such as the Miluk and Hanis Coos, Lower Umpqua, Siuslaw, Alsea, Tillamook and many more, the harvest, preparation, and sharing of salmon and other traditional foods are a vital component of their livelihood, traditional, and ceremonial practices (Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, 2024). The decline and loss of salmon, driven by habitat loss, dams, and disturbed river systems, has had an immense and devastating impact on the many Tribes of western Oregon. Fishing rights, access to traditional foods, and the self-determined management of the lands salmon depend on are a central component of Tribal sovereignty today, and must play a role in the

restoration of Oregon's forests and ecosystems.

The Klamath Tribes are not a coastal nation, but have historically had a deep relationship with salmon (Bauman, Margaret, 2026; Neubauer, Courtney & Klamath Tribes, 2025). The Klamath River was once the third largest salmon-producing river on the West Coast; salmon disappeared from the Klamath after the construction of six dams between 1918 and 1962 (Kimbrough, 2024). Before the construction of the dams, salmon provided more than one-half of the food supply for the Klamath, Modoc, and Yahookskin Paiute people; salmon has been absent from their culture and way of life since 1909 (Neubauer, Courtney & Klamath Tribes, 2025). The Klamath Tribes, along with the Yurok and Karuk Tribes in California, led a decades-long fight to remove the four hydroelectric dams. Between 2023 and 2024, all four dams were removed, reopening 420 miles of river and tributaries; this was the largest dam-removal project in history. In October 2024, a fall-run Chinook salmon was found in Oregon's Klamath Basin for the first time in over a century (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2024). While salmon can once again reach the upper basin, two smaller, agricultural dams remain on the Klamath, limiting full habitat recovery. The historic loss and monumental restoration of salmon access in the Klamath Basin is essential to understand the broader context of Tribal salmon stewardship in western Oregon.

Appendix D

HCP Aquatic Conservation Strategy

The HCP relies on the following strategies to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impact of takings of covered species:

Riparian Conservation Areas: The HCP establishes stream buffers, known as Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs), in which timber harvest is not permitted; these are intended to mitigate increased sedimentation and stream temperature increase due to covered activity. Functioning riparian (streamside) habitats shade surface waters, generate large wood, retain sediments, support macro-invertebrate communities, and are necessary for a healthy aquatic habitat (Coast Coho Partnership, n.d.-b). Large woody debris (fallen trees, tree branches, etc.) is naturally recruited into aquatic systems, either streamside or as flow from upper watersheds. When forests are harvested, this natural debris is removed from the system, removing natural habitat and protection that aquatic species rely on. RCAs are intended to maximize the amount of large woody debris that would naturally be recruited into aquatic systems. RCAs will vary by stream type and size. Approximately 35,000 acres are proposed to be designated as RCAs across the permit area. Timber harvest is not allowed in RCAs; activity in RCAs are limited to essential activities needed to implement covered activities (e.g., road construction and maintenance) or to complete stream enhancement actions, including placement of large woody debris, channel restoration, and fish barrier removal (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022).

Habitat Conservation Areas: HCAs are designated areas intended to conserve habitat for terrestrial covered species. While the HCP does not frame HCAs as for the benefit of aquatic species, fish bearing streams that run through HCAs will also benefit from this designation. Forest management activities in HCAs are limited to those "necessary and prudent" to improve habitat quantity and quality over the permit term (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022). Forests comprising HCAs will be managed to maintain or develop late-seral structure stands (old and mature conifer forests), which means that timber harvest is allowed in HCAs, just not clear-cutting (Jiang et al., 2004). HCAs comprise 275,000 acres across the permit area (43% of the permit area including RCAs).

Instream Improvement Projects: Over the 70 year permit term, ODF will complete 440 instream improvement projects, on average 5-7 projects per year. Stream enhancement projects are intended to supplement spatial conservation efforts (RCAs and HCAs). While RCAs are intended to minimize increase in stream temperature, minimize sediment transfer from covered activities, and facilitate recruitment of wood through natural tree fall and flow events, stream enhancement projects are intended to address areas that have not recovered from historic disturbance or past land use, or have deficient stream processes and habitat that are required by covered species. The HCP also indicates that projects should be located where covered activities (e.g. timber harvest, road management) are occurring.

Conservation Fund: The ESA requires the HCP to specify the funding available for conservation actions during the permit term; NOAA and USFWS are required to ensure that the HCP and ODF accurately estimate these costs (Endangered Species Act of 1973, 1973; Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022). To do so, the HCP establishes a Conservation Fund to pay for aquatic restoration activities (e.g., instream wood enhancement, fish barrier removal), upland restoration activities (e.g., treatment of stands with Swiss needle cast, converting stands to higher quality habitat), and strategic terrestrial conservation strategies that directly benefit covered species during the permit term (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022). Year to year Conservation Fund spending is tied to harvest volume and will vary based on the type of projects implemented. Based on ODF's historic project costs, the HCP estimates that ODF will spend, on average, $325,000 annually during the permit term on aquatic restoration activities, paid directly from the Conservation Fund (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2022).

Applied SAP Framework

Appendix E

Oregon has a dense landscape of plans and agreements that guide salmon restoration and forest management, including the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds, the Oregon Coast Salmon Recovery Plan, ESA Recovery Plans for listed species, the Northwest Forest Plan, and the Oregon Department of Forestry's State Forest Management Plans. These include Coho Specific plans such as the OC Coho ESU, Final ESA Recovery Plan for Oregon Coast Coho Salmon (NMFS 2016), and the Oregon Coast Coho Conservation Plan (ODFW 2007). While these broader plans identify population-scale limiting factors and recommend a suite of strategies to recover each population, both also emphasize that recovery ultimately depends on implementing locally developed plans with finer-scale, targeted conservation actions. Decisions about where and how these actions are carried out must be made in locally convened forums so that input from landowners and other stakeholders can be fully integrated into both long-term habitat restoration strategies and the selection of near-term projects. SAPs, and the Coast Coho Partnership, are structured to meet those needs for and with the communities within each basin.

Across all basins, the SAPs are grounded in long-standing partnerships among major landowners, managers, Tribes, and community stakeholders. In many cases, these groups have collaborated for decades, but not always through a unified, basin-scale framework. Each SAP formalizes that coordination, drawing on the trust, relationships, and local knowledge built over time. The diverse partners involved bring direct connections to priority subbasins and to the ecological, economic, cultural, and social values that define their watersheds. By leveraging these deep community and landscape ties, the SAPs translate shared priorities into focused, strategic conservation actions that build on past successes and strengthen collective stewardship moving forward.

Each SAP creates a strategic framework to determine objectives, opportunities, focal areas, and priority actions and projects. The process begins by analyzing the federal and state recovery plan strategies, and then integrating sub-watershed specific social and ecological conditions to create a tailored and strategic recovery plan that is highly location-specific.

While each SAP determines guiding principles unique to each watershed, all of the SAPs implement science based modelling. A common model SAPs adhere to is the anchor habitat model which highlights stream reaches that provide all the essential geomorphic habitat features necessary to support the complete salmonids' freshwater life history. Under this model, stream gradient, temperature, terraces, and floodplain width are weighted to highlight focal reaches. Other models include the stronghold model, which argues that in the long- term, the most cost-effective strategy is to protect and restore habitat that is in good or excellent condition rather than focusing on highly degraded systems. This approach recognizes that the stressors on highly modified systems can take so long to reverse that restoration benefits are often uncertain while expanding areas of functioning habitat are more likely to show a more immediate return on investment. Each SAP proposes both long-term goals, strategies, and projects and a near-term project implementation plan.

Appendix F

ODF Restoration Cooperator Project Request Form

Restoration Cooperator Request for ODF Participation in Restoration Activities on State Forest Lands

Please keep responses to 3 pages or less not including project map(s) and submit to ODF's Aquatic and Riparian Specialist. Early consultation with ODF A&R Specialist is welcomed and encouraged.

1. Name of project and primary project cooperator (with contact information).
2. Project Location including county(s), township-range-section, and ODF district.
3. ODF District where project is located.
4. Briefly describe the watershed problem(s) that this restoration project seeks to address.
5. Briefly explain why the project is a priority need at this time.
6. Does the project address a restoration action identified in a regional assessment or recovery plan? If so, please explain and provide the name of the primary plan or locally relevant document(s).
7. Does this project build upon other successful projects completed in the basin/watershed? If so, briefly describe.
8. Describe the proposed project objectives and provide detail for requests specifically of ODF for project involvement including cash or in-kind contributions.
9. Identify all project partners and their planned contributions to the project.
10. Identify proposed project timeline, specifically project component implementation on State Forest Lands.
11. Identify possible funding sources and proposal timelines.
12. What permitting will be needed for this project?
13. Identify the project location (include a map of the project area with land ownership and legal description). Include
    - Access locations (ingress/egress) and proposed tree removal locations for project implementation
    - ID specific proposed actions at each location – can be narrative with the map need described above

Figure 11. ODF Restoration Cooperator Request for ODF Participation in Restoration Activities on State Forest Lands, provided by Oregon Department of Forestry

Appendix G

ODF Review Process

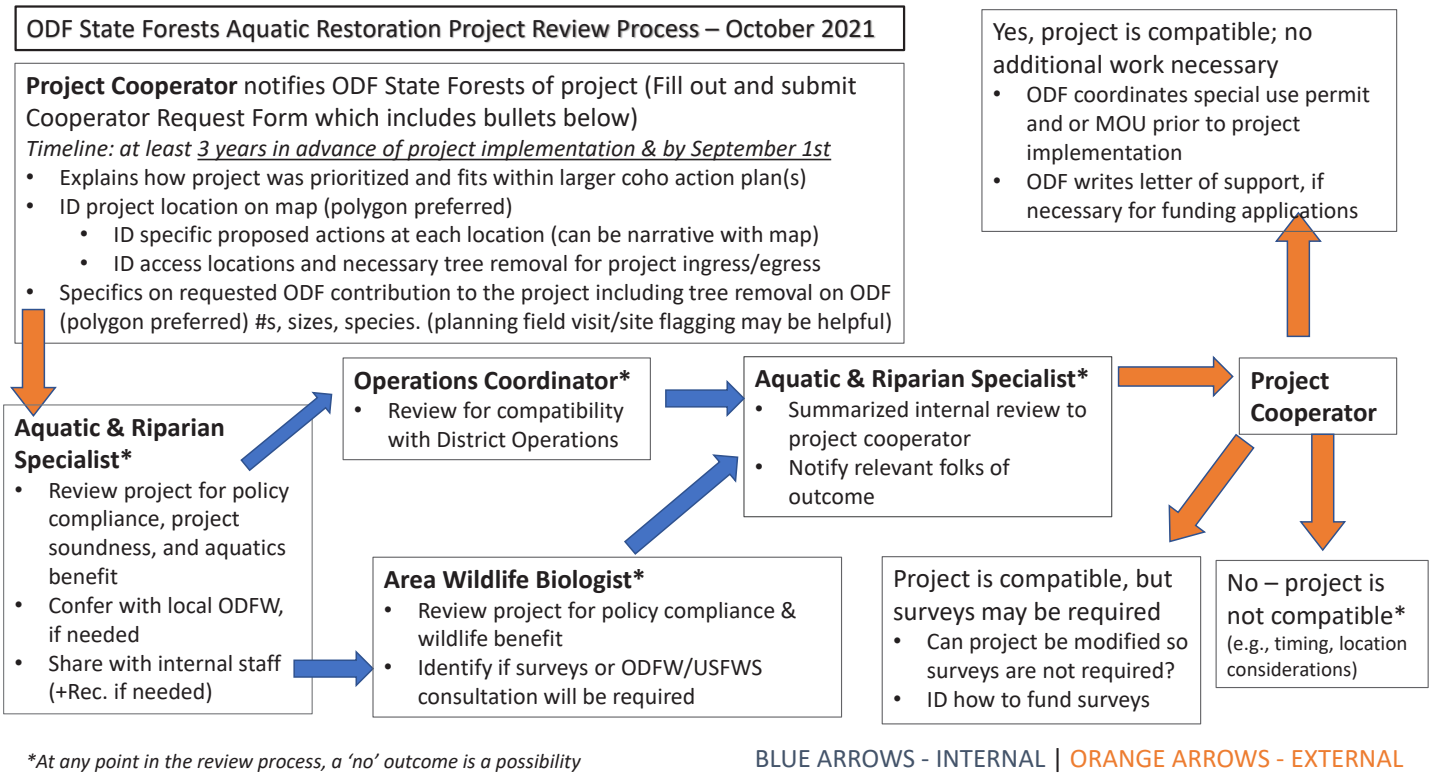


Figure 12. ODF Aquatic Restoration Review Process, provided by Oregon Department of Forestry

Appendix H

Approved Partnership Project Implementation Checklist

APPROVED PARTNERSHIP PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST FOR ODF MANAGED STATE FORESTLANDS

Prior to Project Work Commencing:

- ☐ Special Use Permit from ODF and MOU from the permittee is in place and has been executed by all parties for the project and includes special conditions and any access needs on ODF managed lands.
- ☐ ODF has been provided with a written copy of any access agreements with adjacent landowners as required for project access.
- ☐ A Notification of Operation/Permit to Operate Power Driven machinery has been submitted into FERNS by permittee at least 30-days prior to planned project start date.
- ☐ A pre-operations meeting with ODF has been scheduled at least 30-days prior to planned project start date. During pre-operations meeting permittee shall submit:
  - Operational timeline.
  - Name of project representative that will be on site during active project operations.
  - Evidence of secured, required permits/reviews for all planned activities
  - A site mitigation and rehab plan.
- ☐ All fire season requirements are in place for the operation.
- ☐ The Operations Plan has been approved and signed by ODF and project can begin accordingly.

After Project Work is Complete:

- ☐ All requirements for cleanup and rehab have been completed as agreed to in the SUP, MOU, Rehab Plan and Operations Plan.
- ☐ ODF has been notified of project completion, has reviewed the project work, and has provided a letter to permittee that all requirements have been met.
- ☐ All post-project reporting to OWEB through OWRI has been completed.

Figure 13. ODF Approved Partnership Project Checklist, provided by Oregon Department of Forestry

Appendix I

Coast Coho Partnership SAP Basin Descriptions

The following basin descriptions and maps are drawn directly from their respective Strategic Action Plan.

Nehalem River

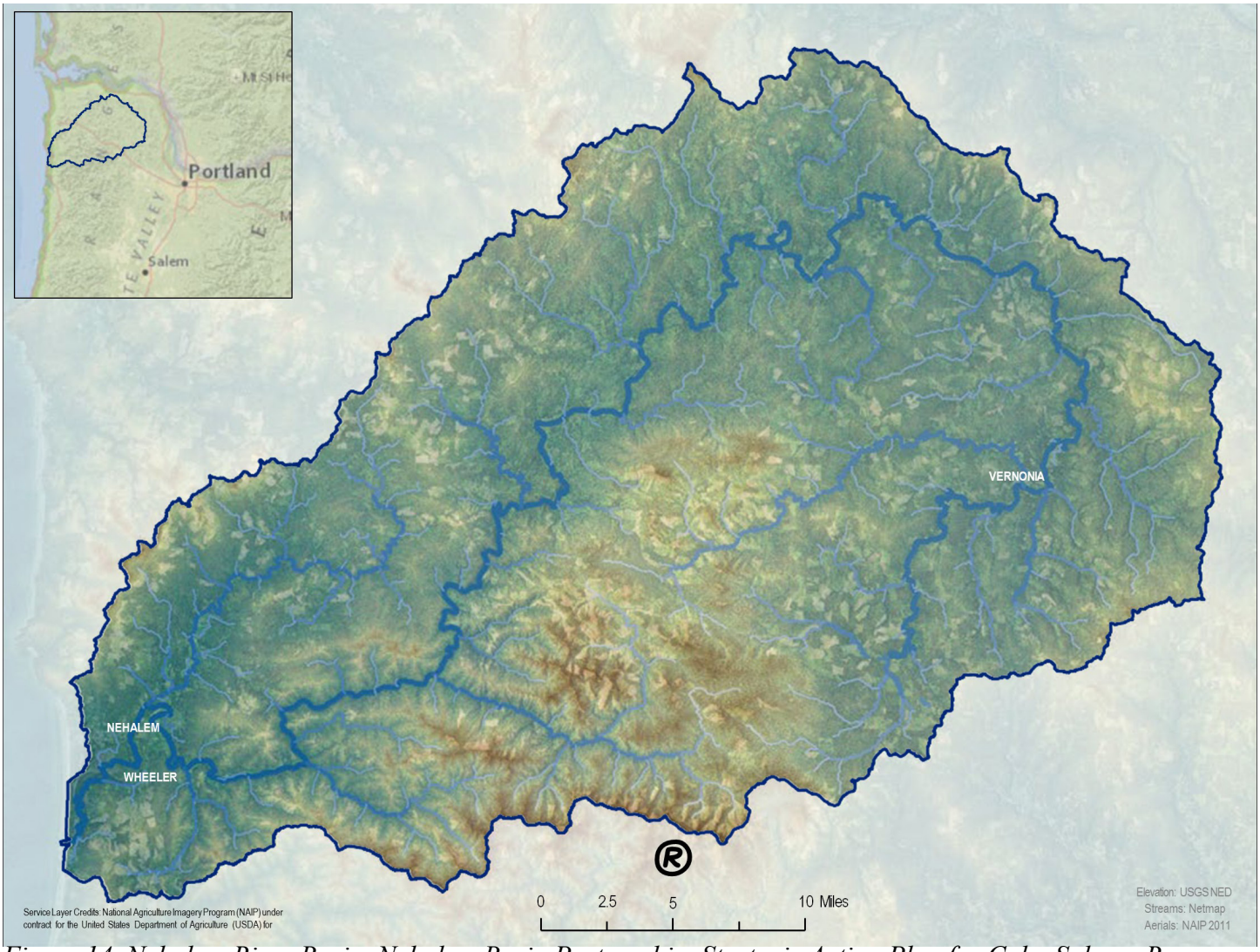


Figure 14. Nehalem River Basin. Nehalem Basin Partnership. Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery on the Nehalem River. 2023.

"The Nehalem River is the third-longest coastal river in Oregon. Located in the state's northwest corner, the river drains approximately 855 square miles of Washington, Columbia, Clatsop, and Tillamook Counties. The Nehalem River flows 118.5 river miles from its source on Giveout Mountain, west of the town of Timber, to Nehalem Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Along the way, the mainstem Nehalem River collects input from over 935 miles of tributaries (Maser 1999). The Nehalem River watershed is home to an independent population of Oregon Coast Coho salmon that relies on the watershed and its habitat-forming processes for adult spawning, juvenile rearing, and migration to and from the ocean (NOAA 2007; Lawson et al. 2007)."

(Nehalem Basin Partnership, 2023)

Tillamook Watershed



Figure 15. Tillamook Watershed. Tillamook Bay Watershed Coho Collaborative. Draft Strategic Action Plan for the Restoration of Coho Habitat in the Tillamook Bay Watershed. Coast Coho Partnership, 2026.

"Approximately 50 miles south of the Columbia River mouth and 60 miles west of Portland, Tillamook Bay is the third largest estuary on the Oregon Coast. The open-water bay covers approximately 8,289 acres (ac, Northwest Area Committee 1996) and has a watershed area of 561 square miles (NOAA Fisheries 2023a). Five rivers and approximately 19 smaller tributaries enter the bay (Northwest Area Committee 1996). The watershed had an approximate population of 16,300 in 2007 (NOAA Fisheries 2023a).

The spatial scope of the Tillamook SAP includes all habitat components that support the independent Tillamook Coho population. These components include all tributary, mainstem, and estuary habitats within the distribution of OC Coho in the Tillamook Bay watershed. The Tillamook Bay watershed is divided into six 5th field Hydrological Unit Codes (HUCs): Tillamook Bay, Miami River, Kilchis River, Wilson River, Trask River, and Tillamook River. The Tillamook Bay and all lower portions of the rivers are tidally influenced, while the remaining sub-watersheds are outside of tidal influence and dominated by archetypal coastal forest under various ownership and management. In general, the Tillamook SAP focuses restoration efforts in sub-watersheds that support the full suite of Coho life stages, recognizing the need to protect and restore habitats that support Coho across multiple life stages such as spawning and rearing."

(Tillamook Bay Watershed Coho Collaborative, 2026)

Siletz River



Figure 16. Siletz River Watershed. Siletz Coho Partnership. Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery on the Siletz River (Wild Salmon Center, 2025). 2025.

"The Siletz River watershed covers approximately 373 square miles of the western central Oregon coast. Starting deep within the Coast Range of Polk County, the Siletz gathers flow from the mountainous terrain along the west side of the Coast Range and meanders south and west before entering the Pacific Ocean at Siletz Bay south of Lincoln City. The mainstem Siletz River begins at the confluence of its north and south forks near Valsetz, Oregon, in Polk County and winds about 67 miles as it collects flow from its 235,531-acre drainage area (Lawson et al. 2007). Major tributaries to the Siletz River include the North and South Forks, Cedar Creek, Drift Creek, Euchre Creek, Gravel Creek, Rock Creek, Schooner Creek, and Sunshine Creek.

The Siletz River watershed supports an independent population of OC Coho Salmon (NMFS 2008). This population relies on the watershed's 548 miles of Coho habitat and its habitat-forming processes for adult spawning, juvenile rearing, and migration to and from the ocean."

(Siletz Coho Partnership, 2025)

Siuslaw River Watershed

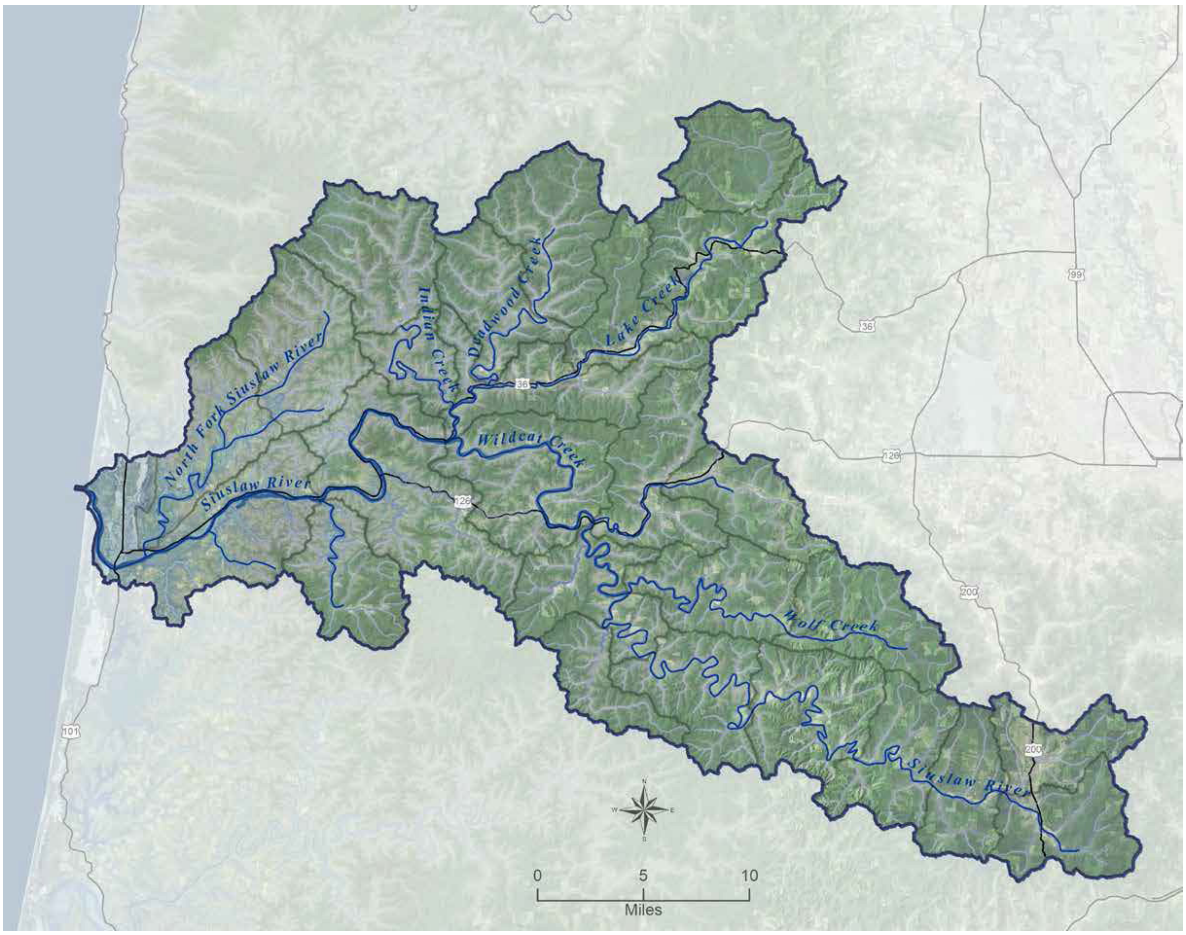


Figure 17. Siuslaw River Watershed. The Siuslaw Coho Partnership. "Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery on the Siuslaw River." Coast Coho Partnership, March 31, 2017.

"The Siuslaw River watershed is a remarkably rich and productive ecosystem that historically supported one of the largest coho salmon runs on the Oregon Coast, along with Chinook and chum salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout. The river begins in the rain-drenched coniferous forests of the Oregon Coast Range and the Lorane Valley west of Eugene, flowing approximately 109 miles through low mountain forests, valley bottomlands with scattered wetlands, sand dunes, and an extensive estuary before reaching the Pacific Ocean near Florence. The basin covers roughly 504,000 acres (773 square miles). The highly dissected Siuslaw River system includes about 5,250 miles of streams that collect precipitation across the landscape, consisting of 1,207 miles of low-gradient streams and unconfined or moderately confined floodplains, 807 miles of moderate-gradient confined streams, and 3,190 miles of steep or very steep headwater and bedrock canyon streams (Ecotrust 2002).

The Siuslaw River basin is a fourth-field watershed (HUC 17100206), with Lake Creek as its major tributary."

(Siuslaw Coho Partnership, 2017)

Coquille River

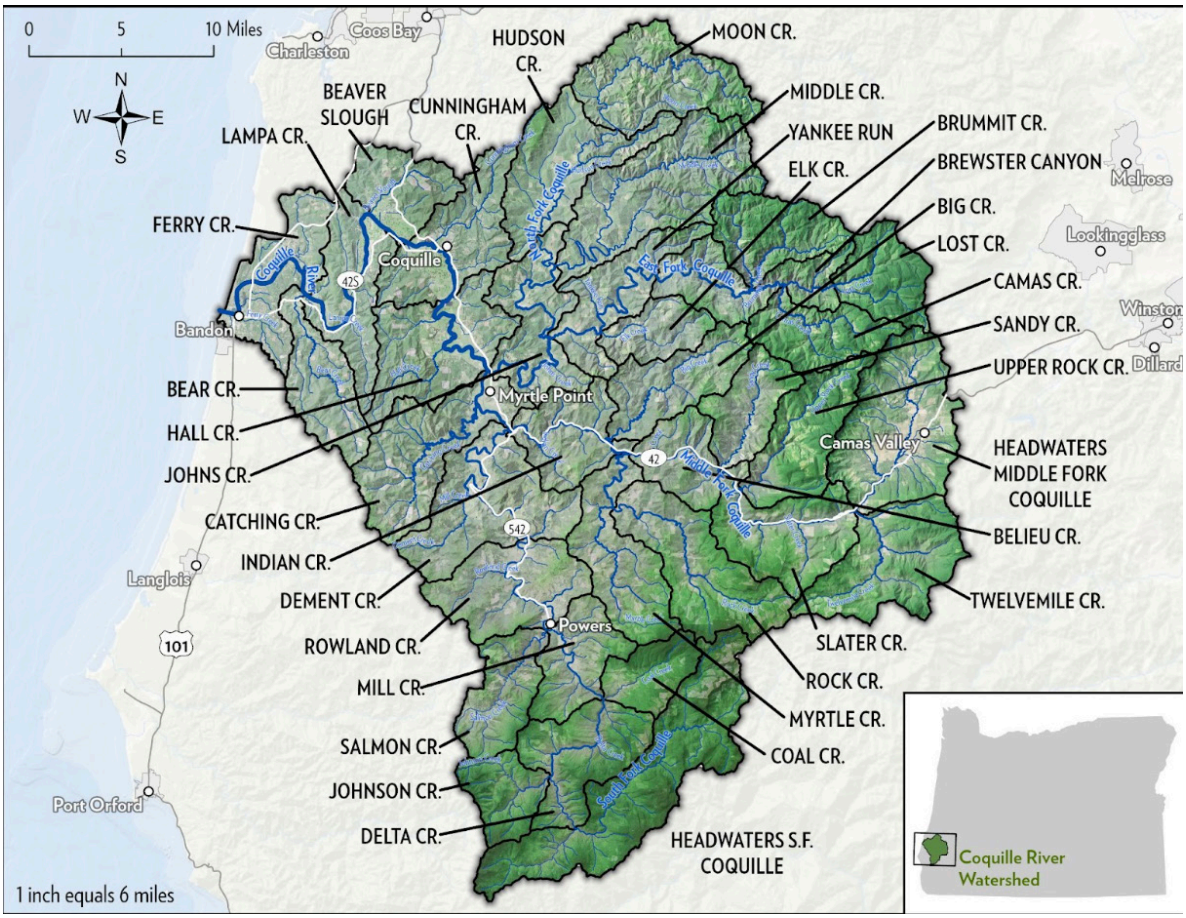


Figure 18. Coquille River Watershed. Coquille Basin Partnership. Strategic Action Plan for Coho Salmon Recovery on the Coquille Basin. 2025.

"The Coquille River begins along the west side of the Coast Range and a small section of the Klamath Mountains. Gathering flow from 1,089 square miles of southwestern Oregon, it is the state's largest completely coastal watershed. The headwaters of the Coquille's four major rivers — the North, South, Middle, and East Forks — gather flow from the basin's mountainous slopes and merge later to form the main Coquille River. Together, the Coquille River and its four major tributaries cover 226.5 miles.

The Coquille Basin is divided into five 5th field Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs): Lower Coquille, North Fork Coquille, East Fork Coquille, Middle Fork Coquille, and South Fork Coquille River. The Lower Coquille (0 - 0.6 river miles), South Fork (0 - 35.6 river miles) and North Fork (0 - 2.8 river miles) Coquille HUCs are tidally influenced, while the remaining 5th field HUCs are outside of tidal influence and dominated by archetypal coastal forest under various ownership and management.

The spatial scope of the Coquille Coho SAP includes all habitat components that support the independent Coquille Coho salmon population. These components include all the tributary, mainstem, estuary and nearshore marine habitats within OC Coho's distribution in the Coquille Basin. This population is a high priority for the recovery of the Mid-South Coast stratum of the OC Coho ESU. In general, the Coquille SAP focuses restoration efforts in sub-watersheds that support the full suite of Coho life stages, recognizing the need to protect and restore Coho 'anchor habitats', areas that support Coho across multiple life stages such as spawning and rearing."

(Coquille Basin Partnership, 2025)