



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

Department of Fish and Wildlife

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January 5, 2015

The Honorable Peter Courtney, Senate President
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE, S-201
Salem, OR 97301

The Honorable Tina Kotek, Speaker
Oregon House of Representatives
900 Court St. NE, H-269
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Courtney and Speaker Kotek:

Nature of the Request

The purpose of this letter is to provide a notification of intent of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to apply for Federal Funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for acquisition of a property in Columbia County. The Department is proposing to apply for \$2,700,000 of federal dollars over two grant application periods. The estimated cost of acquisition is \$3,600,000. These funds will be combined with Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) funding awarded to Columbia Land Trust. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife funds will not be used as match. Columbia Land Trust would hold the title to the property upon recording.

This funding opportunity is provided through the USFWS Endangered Species Act Section 6 - Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund. The grant application deadline is January 23, 2015, for the first request of \$1,376,786. If the grant is funded, the Department would propose to submit a grant request of \$1,323,214 in the following year. The department must phase its applications since there are not enough grant funds available in the first year to apply for the full amount. No positions are requested with these funds.

Agency Action

This federal funding opportunity is made available with the requirement that state fish and wildlife agencies serve as the applicant. If this request is approved and the grants are awarded, funding would be administered through the Department's existing Conservation Program. State proposals must contribute a minimum non-Federal match of 25 percent of the total program costs. The Department will not provide any of the required match. All required non-federal match will come from OWEB funds awarded to Columbia Land Trust.



Specifically, this funding request would propose to purchase Westport Slough, which is approximately 980 acres near Clatskanie, Oregon. The property provides terrestrial habitat for four federally listed species including Columbian white-tailed deer, streaked horned lark, and two endangered plants. Additionally, this project will protect 15 federally listed fish species: 13 salmon and steelhead, green sturgeon, and eulachon. The property is within the Columbia-Clatskanie Conservation Opportunity Area in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, and contains two key habitats (freshwater wetlands and riparian areas). The property provides benefit to more than 25 Oregon Species of Concern or Species of Greatest Conservation Need. A new, limited-entry public hunting opportunity for waterfowl will also become available.

If funded, Columbia Land Trust would hold title to the property. With Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's involvement, Columbia Land Trust will develop a management plan and will be responsible for the operations and maintenance of the property.

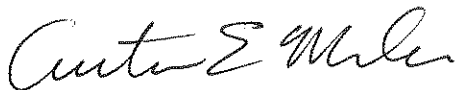
Acquisition of this property helps meet Recovery Objectives and De-listing Criteria for Columbian White-tailed Deer, which are a federally-listed species under the Endangered Species Act. New public access for limited-entry waterfowl hunting will be an additional benefit. These factors directly support Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's mission by protecting fish and wildlife habitat, and increasing recreation opportunity. Management strategies for proposed lands ensure that habitat integrity is maintained, upland and wetland habitats are preserved, and restoration efforts are focused on areas of greatest concern.

Action Requested

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife respectfully requests permission to apply for federal funding through the USFWS ESA Section 6 - Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund.

Award notifications are expected by summer 2015 and 2016. The Department will seek legislative approval in the 2015 Legislative Session for Federal Fund limitation.

Sincerely,



Curtis E. Melcher
Interim Director