

ANALYSIS

Parks and Recreation Department Neacoxie Corridor Acquisition

Analyst: April McDonald

Request: Approve, retroactively, the submission of a federal grant application request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of \$450,000 for acquisition of land along the Neacoxie Corridor.

Analysis: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition grant program was established in 2001 to facilitate land acquisition for the purpose of protecting habitat for federally endangered or threatened species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) has an existing cooperative agreement with the USFWS for conservation grants related to invertebrate species, such as the federally endangered Oregon silverspot butterfly. The cooperative agreement provides access to USFWS funds designated to the states for ESA conservation purposes. OPRD seeks retroactive permission to apply for a grant of \$450,000 for the acquisition of two acres of land along the Neacoxie Corridor in Clatsop County. This purchase would create a contiguous network of existing properties and properties being pursued for conservation easements for the purpose of protecting habitat suitable for the Oregon silverspot butterfly.

If awarded, OPRD would subgrant funds to the North Coast Land Conservancy (NCLC) for the property purchase. A match requirement of 25% will be fulfilled by NCLC and its partners. OPRD will not be required to supply any funds toward the requirement but may provide in-kind match in the form of staff time required to administer the grant. OPRD submitted a timely notification of its intent to apply for the grant in advance of the January 5, 2024 application deadline and will be able to implement this grant opportunity with existing staff.

Legislative Fiscal Office Recommendation: The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends that the Joint Committee on Ways and Means approve the request.

Department of Parks and Recreation Filimoehala

Request: Retroactive authorization to apply for a grant of \$450,000 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Section 6 Recovery Lands Acquisition program for a Neacoxie Corridor land acquisition project.

Recommendation: Approve the request.

Discussion: The Department of Parks and Recreation (OPRD) is requesting retroactive authorization to apply for a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for funding that would be passed through to the North Coast Land Conservancy for the acquisition of a 2-acre area in the Neacoxie Corridor in Clatsop County.

The proposed acquisition would provide a connection between a network of existing properties being used for conservation efforts of the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly; a species listed as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. The Oregon Silverspot Butterfly inhabits coastal grasslands near the Pacific Ocean and relies on a few species of violets to act as host plants.

OPRD provided a 10-day notification of their intent to apply for the grant on December 22, 2023, and applied for the grant on January 5, 2024. The grant does not require matching funds, but OPRD does anticipate utilizing some in-kind match through staff time contributions to the project. If awarded, OPRD will return before the Legislature to request Federal Funds expenditure limitation to carry out the work of the grant.



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

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January 16, 2024

The Honorable Senator Rob Wagner, President of the Senate
The Honorable Representative Dan Rayfield, Speaker of the House
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

Nature of Request:

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) requests permission to submit a grant application to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Section 6 Recovery Lands Acquisition grant opportunity in the amount of \$450,000. The application deadline is January 5, 2024. The requested funds would be subgranted to the North Coast Land Conservancy (NCLC). OPRD sent a 10-day notification letter to Legislative Leadership on December 22, 2023.

Agency Action:

This grant program is only open to state agencies having existing cooperative agreements with USFWS. In Oregon, three agencies have these agreements and each agency is responsible for different aspects of endangered species conservation. OPRD is responsible for grants related to conservation of invertebrate species; the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is responsible for vertebrate-related grants; and the Oregon Department of Agriculture is responsible for plant-related grants. Each agency's agreement with the USFWS provides access to US Fish and Wildlife Services Funds designated to the states for Endangered Species Act conservation purposes. The arrangement is slightly different from a traditional grant opportunity.

OPRD does not solicit applications for funds for recovery land acquisitions and only occasionally applies when external conservation organizations scope concepts with their USFWS partners and bring the proposals to OPRD. In the case of this proposal from the North Coast Land Conservancy, we received notification of their interest in applying for funding through OPRD in early December 2023.

The proposed acquisition would add 2 acres of land to the Neahcoxia Corridor of Clatsop County. These acquired lands would provide a connection between a network of existing properties and properties being pursued for conservation easement to create a continuous block of habitat suitable for the federally endangered Oregon Silverspot Butterfly.

The OPRD may supply match in the form of staff time up to approximately 50 person-hours to administer the grant and coordinate documentation and reporting. OPRD may charge overhead on the OPRD staff salaries and wages, but not on the value of real estate or grant funding if this is needed for the subgrantee to meet match requirements.

Action Requested:

OPRD requests permission to submit a grant application to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Section 6 Recovery Lands Acquisition grant opportunity in the amount of \$450,000. Upon a successful

grant award, OPRD will request any needed expenditure limitation from the appropriate Legislative Committee or the Emergency Board.

Sincerely,


Lisa Sumption (Jan 12, 2024 13:53 PST)

Lisa Sumption
Director