



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



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MEMORANDUM

Date: February 26, 2025
To: Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
From: Sara O'Brien, Executive Director
Subject: Supplemental responses to questions from agency budget presentation

Thank you for your thoughtful questions during OWEB's agency budget presentation on February 25, 2025. The following memo includes supplemental information in response to three questions raised during the budget presentation.

1. Could you share more information about juniper control projects funded by OWEB?

Western juniper is a native tree species that has become much more widespread during the last two centuries because of wildfire suppression. Juniper encroachment contributes to loss of sagebrush and grassland habitats and degrades the condition of forests and rangelands throughout central and eastern Oregon. Western juniper control projects are eligible for OWEB funds because of the impacts of juniper encroachment to watershed health.

A search of OWEB's grants database found 144 restoration, technical assistance, and monitoring projects funded since July 1, 2019 that include a juniper control component. The total amount of these awarded grants is \$48.5 million.

2. In addition to investments in noxious weed prevention and control, does OWEB invest in prevention and control of other types of invasive species?

Most of OWEB's investments in invasive species control are focused on invasive plants. However, OWEB has funded several projects related to other invasive species. A search of OWEB's database found the following investments since July 1, 2019 in restoration, technical assistance, and monitoring projects that included elements to address invasive species and their impacts to watershed health.

- Two monitoring projects evaluating native species response to invasive bullfrog removal.
- Four restoration, technical assistance, and engagement projects that referenced invasive carp control.
- Eight monitoring and technical assistance projects that referenced invasive smallmouth or largemouth bass.

3. What are the sources of Other Funds in OWEB's budget?

There are several sources of Other Funds in OWEB's budget. The Oregon Legislature has made several allocations of General Funds and Lottery Bond Funds to OWEB to support grants and operations. Because the grant-funded projects can take multiple biennia to implement, the Oregon Legislature has

made several General Fund allocations to Treasury accounts where they become Other Funds and do not need to be reverted at the end of the biennium. These types of Other Funds in OWEB's budget include the following.

- Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program funding for grants and staffing
- Drinking Water Source Protection Program funding for grants
- Natural and Working Lands funding for projects and administration
- Water Acquisitions funding for grants and staffing

In addition to the legislatively allocated sources above, OWEB is also administering the following Other Fund sources.

- Funding for Forest Collaboratives technical assistance grants from the Oregon Department of Forestry, contingent on ODF's legislatively adopted budget.
- Salmon license plate dollars for projects benefiting salmon species.
- Mitigation funds from PacifiCorp for water quality improvements in the Upper Klamath basin. OWEB was named administrator of these funds after responding to a Request for Proposals.

OWEB also anticipates possible future mitigation funds from Idaho Power for water quality and salmon habitat improvements as part of the Hells Canyon Dam complex relicensing process.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact me.