



Stream Restoration Partnership Implementation Plan 2010

Introduction - Taken from the Declaration of Cooperation

The purpose for a “*Stream Restoration Partnership*” is to facilitate the deliverance of enhanced and accelerated stream restoration projects for private landowners and landowner technical assistance coordinators (the watershed councils, soil and water conservation districts and non-governmental organizations engaged with landowners to assist with implementing restoration projects) who are working with them. There is wide recognition of and a willingness to address the problems arising from slow, cumbersome, and poorly coordinated funding and permitting processes for voluntary restoration projects. Therefore, the goal of the *Partnership* is to facilitate more quality restoration actions by private landowners in and along streams across the state, to improve freshwater health in a timelier manner.

The focus is to consider and address how to make the three key components needed for implementing voluntary restoration projects on private lands – technical assistance, funding and the regulatory process – work better. This means integrating the components together in a more efficient and cost-effective manner for the stakeholders, private landowners, and local communities for the betterment of streams.

Given the opportunities and challenges for restoring aquatic resources on private lands, and the limited resources we have to address both, the *Stream Restoration Partnership (SRP)* embraces a higher and greater level of coordination and collaboration across all levels of government and working with the funders, private sector and non-governmental organizations involved with restoration work. New regulatory thinking and approaches are clearly needed to better reflect the context, and manage the risk, associated with voluntary restoration projects that are intended to have a net conservation benefit. The *Partnership* approach also provides a public/private/non-profit stakeholder framework that is consistent with, and bolsters the state’s longstanding efforts to foster effective voluntary conservation with the *Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds*.

The emerging *SRP* approach focuses on using new tools and new thinking to address institutional barriers to efficient restoration actions, primarily in the project funding and permitting arenas, and in ways that enhance efficiency without sacrificing project quality. The *desired outcomes* of bringing efficiencies to restoration projects include:

- comprehensive advancement of needed project development elements,
- improved, timely permitting processes for voluntary restoration projects,
- more efficient movement of restoration dollars to the ground,
- improved ability to focus time on landowner outreach and project development instead of paperwork, and

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- greater ecological and local economic benefit from this voluntary restoration work through increased scale of actions.
- Greater landowner interest in restoration.

The Governor created the Oregon Solutions approach to help address complex issues with effective, sustainable solutions. To this end, Governor Kulongoski's Office will continue to support this effort and is interested in developing and assisting with needed administrative policy. The Governor's Office recognizes the need for improved, timely permitting processes for voluntary restoration projects that require state and federal permits. The Governor's Office encourages new thinking, such as DSL's permit streamlining for restoration projects, and the development of new tools, like the StreamBank web tool, that aim to simplify and accelerate the process of funding, permitting, implementing, and reporting on stream restoration projects without sacrificing quality of outcomes.

Specific 2010 Implementation Actions and Intentions discussed by SRP Stakeholders include:

The SRP Project Team members have broad agreement with the need to accelerate implementation of the highest priority restoration and conservation actions needed to improve ecological resilience. More effective coordination of permitting for restoration projects, implementation of electronic permitting and the use of web tools to better identify restoration priorities, deliver technical assistance, provide funding and monitor projects is needed as soon as possible if we are to accelerate the completion of voluntary, high priority restoration actions in a meaningful way on private lands.

Late Winter and Spring 2010

- *Governor's Natural Resource Office*: arranging a formalized connection between the Partnership and the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds Interagency Core Team in addressing regulatory efficiency issues. The intent is to clarify the path to tackling a coordinated, more streamlined approach for permitting, avoiding duplicate processes (SRP and Core Team), and facilitating dialogue on a regular, recurring basis to advance stakeholder feedback and suggestions for improvement in policy and practice to better implement the Oregon Plan and ESA species recovery plans.
 - Feb2 – Joint meeting of the SRP with the Core Team at the ODFW Commission meeting room.
 - Updating and revising the Core Team Charter.
 - Co-convene shared dialogue between the Partnership stakeholder groups and the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds Core Team on a regular, recurring basis.
 - Strengthen state and federal partnerships and mutual support
- *DSL*-organized workshops (“Hot Tips for Cool Water”) around the State (4-5 locations) to assist restoration proponents with designing, permitting and implementing restoration projects. Partners include *USACOE*, *USFWS*, *ODFW*, *The Freshwater Trust*, *NRCS*, others TBD.
 - USACOE and DSL efforts to clarify permit exemptions under the Clean Water Act before the 2010 restoration workshops.
 - February 9 workshop planning meeting will be held at the State Lands Building, 775 Summer St. NE, Suite 100, Salem from 1-3pm.

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- The proposed dates for these workshops: 4/19-22, 4/26-29, 5/10-13, 5/17-20 and 6/7-10.
- *DSL, OWEB & ODFW*: Finalize Large Wood and Boulder Placement Guidance, and the Culvert Toolbox and related guidance developed and discussed with the Inter-agency Fish Passage Barrier Work Group that met in 2009.
- *NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service*: Compile a summary of Biological Opinions related to Programmatic permits with restoration components for review and discussion.
- *The Freshwater Trust*: Provide funding support to staff the creation of an ad hoc Stream Restoration Partnership Steering Committee and development of direction and an initial agenda for a joint meeting with the Core Team.
- *DEQ*: In 2009, the Department approved a Clean Water Act Section 319 joint grant application from The Freshwater Trust to implement three (3) watershed restoration projects using the StreamBank web tool. DEQ will continue to consider 319 grants to support The Freshwater Trust work and use of the StreamBank tool.

On-Going Actions to Accelerate Quality Voluntary Restoration Projects on Private Lands

- *The Freshwater Trust* will continue development of the StreamBank web tool including:
 - Additional partnering with *DEQ* and others to implement priority projects funded in part with Clean Water Act Section 319 grants;
 - *Parametrix* measuring the ecosystem services gains that result from the StreamBank pilot projects in 2009 and 2010. Parametrix will apply its EcoMetrix environmental accounting software to score the uplift in ecological functions associated with stream restoration (e.g., aquatic temperature regulation, habitat formation, aquatic connectivity, soil stability, aquatic cover, and streambed stability).
 - Involvement of StreamBank as a service (“StreamBank Inside” concept) that other entities are using—e.g. working with *Meyer Memorial Trust, Bonneville Environmental Foundation and OWEB* in the Willamette Basin; and with others including *NOAA, Ecotrust*.
 - Project prioritization and further addressing whether an automated approach to project prioritization can be developed that has multi-agency buy-in. This includes whether a prioritization approach a) has merits that the current manual review process does not, b) whether an automated approach can be trusted to move funds independent of human review process (part of concept of coordinating project funding, and making things easier for local coordinators), or c) whether the manual process has advantages that an automated approach cannot replicate or replace.
- *DSL*’s continued work to improve regulatory processes for restoration projects including:
 - 2010: implement exemptions for state removal-fill permits for certain voluntary habitat restoration activities and
 - 2011: consider additional exemptions to take effect, through rulemaking.
- *OWEB* will:

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- Explore use of the StreamBank web tool (“StreamBank Inside” concept) in conjunction with the Willamette Strategic Initiative and the emerging partnership with the *Meyer Memorial Trust*.
- Review the opportunity for accelerating the delivery of restoration projects by expediting permits through provisions provided in Section 214 of the Water Development Act.
- Consistent with the OWEB Strategic Plan, crosswalk and integrate the implementation plans associated with the Clean Water Act TMDLs, the ESA Recovery Plans and the Statewide Conservation Strategy to identify overlapping priority areas
- Produce enhanced and updated guidance and tools for funding restoration projects.
- *DEQ* will:
 - Consider working with the *Department of State Lands* and the *US Army Corps of Engineers* in implementing expedited review processes for restoration permits.
 - Consider revisions to Section 401 review processes for restoration projects as appropriate;
 - Help identify potential EPA grant opportunities to support work related to the development of the StreamBank web tool and e-permitting.
- *ODA* will:
 - Direct 2010 landowner outreach with *Soil and Water Conservation Districts*, in coordination w/ the Stream Restoration Partnership as appropriate.
- *USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service* will:
 - Participate regularly with the SRP and the Core Team.
 - Schedule a SRP presentation at an Oregon Technical Advisory Committee meeting.
 - Schedule a discussion of the purpose and goals of the SRP with the NRCS State Leadership Team.
- *Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife* will:
 - Provide technical support for future restoration projects
 - Provide information about and technical assistance for the department’s landowner assistance programs, which promote voluntary conservation of Oregon’s fish and wildlife resources
 - Consider providing funds to the Project through available incentive programs consistent with department and program goals
 - Participate on the Fish Passage Barrier Work Group and provide context for the department’s legislative responsibilities under the Salmon and Steelhead Recovery Plan
- *Association of Oregon Counties, Department of Land Conservation and Development*
 - Review the DLCDC model ordinance language: "Habitat Restoration Projects in the Floodway" and DSL/USACOE/County permitting process to define next steps to clarify the permitting process for restoration projects, and better align to make the process more efficient for the Counties, the regulators and the applicants.
- Other agencies work to improve regulatory processes—making sure there are efficiency gains across silos as part of an effort to develop an “integrated restoration project delivery system”.

On-going support and facilitation of the Stream Restoration Partnership (SRP):

- The Freshwater Trust (TFT) & Department of State Lands (DSL):
Provide on-going staff support and administration for the SRP
 - From TFT :
 - Provide leadership on this project including staffing support, utilizing our role as a non-governmental organization to the benefit of partnership objectives;
 - Collaborate with partners to identify and pursue systemic changes designed to advance stream restoration efficiencies; Support efforts being advanced by others that support or are consistent with the objectives of this project, including continuing to seek funding directly and support others grant applications for their participation in all aspects of the project;
 - Work in partnership to undertake efforts and explore new or emerging pathways designed to improve the incentives for and/or attractiveness of broader cultural engagement of stream restoration and understanding of its outcomes (e.g., ecosystem services marketplace development, economic research, key areas of stream restoration research);
 - From DSL:
 - Continue to work with the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds Core Team, including a renewed effort to partner with federal agencies, to encourage and facilitate the implementation of restoration projects.
 - Continue to engage in discussions with other state, federal and local agencies on ways to encourage voluntary habitat restoration projects by facilitation of review and authorization process.

Future Action Items Identified by the Stream Restoration Partnership for Consideration include:

- Foster discussion leading to a better understanding of what projects are covered by programmatic permits, additional opportunities for restoration proponents to access programmatic permits and where gaps and opportunities for improvement are, etc.
- Refine the Virtual chat room / web portal concept as a means to coordinate with agencies.
- Continue dialogue regarding Cultural resources and appropriate integration of timely review processes in the context of delivering enhanced and accelerated restoration projects.