



DECLARATION OF COOPERATION

DELTA PONDS PROJECT September, 2003

I. Background

The Delta Ponds area is a unique place for wildlife, natural systems, and environmental education, located in the heart of Oregon's second largest metropolitan area. The City of Eugene has been working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to plan and fund improvements to the ponds, re-connecting them to the Willamette River, enhancing wildlife habitat, and providing passive recreation opportunities. Beyond the Corps project, there is a larger vision for the Delta Ponds: creating a natural area with additional trails for hiking, bird-watching, and educational tours; creating an "outdoor classroom" with amenities like viewpoints, benches, and bridges.

The City of Eugene asked *Oregon Solutions* to put together a group of regional partners who can help Delta Ponds reach its true potential as an urban wildlife area of community, regional, and state significance.

Participants were invited to play an important role in helping with the following objectives:

1. Identify and mobilize resources to help the Delta Ponds area reach its full potential as an urban natural area.
2. Ensure that all regulatory and permitting processes are identified and met in a timely fashion.
3. Identify further opportunities and/or potential issues, and set up a process to address them.

II. Description of the Delta Ponds Project

The Delta Ponds Project encompasses more than 150 acres, including several interconnected ponds in the Goodpasture Island area of Eugene, just north of the Valley River Shopping Center.

The intent of the Corps of Engineers' project is primarily environmental restoration. However, the area also offers rare opportunities for passive recreation and education about wetlands environments. (No more than 10% of the funding for the federal project can be spent on recreational improvements.)

The Corps project improvements will include:

- Improving water flow between the ponds and the Willamette River, providing important side-channel habitat for juvenile salmon.
- Improving water flow between the ponds to enhance water quality
- Tapering of the banks, and planting of natural riparian vegetation to improve habitat
- Adding woody debris and other habitat improvements to the ponds themselves
- Providing recreational improvements (viewing areas, trails), to facilitate the recreational uses currently going on, enhancing internal access and providing a limited amount of parking (25 spaces total)
- Making education and volunteer opportunities available

The total project costs are estimated at \$6.2 million, with \$3.77 million of that having been requested of the US Army Corps of Engineers, under Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act. The City is required to come up with local match. A Feasibility Study for the project has been approved by the Corps of Engineers, and \$3.4 million for the project has been approved by Congress.

Major construction is slated to begin in spring of 2004, with some site preparation possible in fall 2003. Prior to construction, all necessary permits or regulatory sign-offs will be needed, including:

- A Section 401 Water Quality Certification by DEQ (*received in May 2003)
- NOAA Fisheries concurrence (a biological opinion) under the Endangered Species Act (*Note: the Biological Opinion was received in March 2003)
- An NPDES Stormwater permit from DEQ
- ODFW/USFWS concurrence
- Land Use permits
- Building Permits
- Water Rights
- General Authorization from Division of State Lands

III. The Oregon Solutions Collaborative Process

- Begins with a problem or opportunity defined by the community – *The Delta Ponds project, a unique urban natural area that could be a regional resource for passive recreation as well as habitat for juvenile salmon and other wildlife .*
- Chaired by a community convener identified by Oregon’s Governor – *Eugene Mayor Jim Torrey.*
- Uses a collaborative process involving a team of federal, state, and local governments; business, and non-profits. *Steve Greenwood has been contracted to be facilitator for the Delta Ponds Project.*
- Works toward an integrated solution that leverages the resources of the team.
- Results in a signed declaration of cooperation.
- As a starting point, the facilitator proposed the following “ground rules” for the collaborative process:
 1. We recognize that the best outcome depends upon cooperation by all entities at the table.
 2. We recognize that each party has a unique perspective and contribution to make: expertise, labor, financial contribution, in-kind contributions (land, easements), regulatory coordination, and political support (e.g. letters of support for funding)
 3. We commit to openly expressing our ideas, potential contributions, and our concerns: no holding our cards close to the vest.
 4. We are willing to creatively explore potential mutual benefits and solutions: to leverage our ideas and resources toward the greatest community benefit.

IV. Declaration of Cooperation:

This Declaration of Cooperation, while not a binding legal contract, is evidence to and a statement of the good faith and commitment of the undersigned parties.

Public Funding

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Current Omnibus \$3.4 Million will provide the federal portion to fund the U.S. Corps of Engineers work on Delta Ponds, and the Corps' working relationship will be detailed in a signed Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA).


U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

City of Eugene Public Works Department. The City of Eugene will provide overall project management and design of the Delta Ponds project (through the Engineering Division), as well as long-term maintenance (through the Parks and Open Space Division). The City is committed to marshalling the required matching funds or in-kind support for the federally-funded portion of the project, as well as any local match required by state/private funding sources.


City of Eugene Public Works Dept.

Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department: Has granted \$250,000 for recreational purposes for the Delta Ponds project through the 316 Local Government Grant Program, which is a 50% grant that requires local match (in-kind ok) for work that occurs within project grant period.


Oregon State Parks and Rec. Dept.

Lane Council of Governments. Has applied for national Watershed EPA Grant \$1 million applied for, including \$.75 million enhancement to slough downstream of Delta Ponds.


Lane Council of Governments

Cal Young Neighborhood Association. Will investigate use of the City of Eugene's Neighborhood matching grant program, which requires matching funds by neighborhood citizens for projects to benefit the neighborhood. The Cal Young Neighborhood Association is interested in working with the City to educate citizens about the project optimize public benefits from the project.

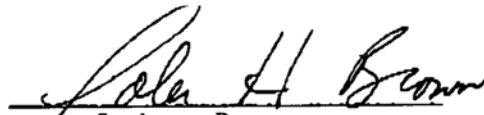

Cal Young Neighbors

The *Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board* has informed the City about lottery & state funding available for environmental restoration: \$15 million per year available (\$2 million has been invested in West Eugene Wetlands). Can't fund recreation, but education projects are OK. In addition, they can use lottery funds for acquisitions that support watershed functioning.)

Volunteer Resources

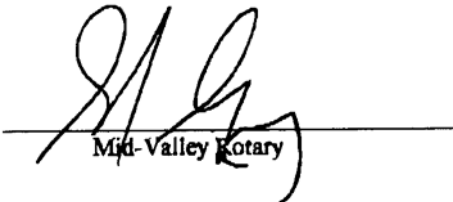
Eugene-area Rotary Clubs. Have adopted the north path east of Goodpasture Island Road at the Delta Ponds as their Centennial project, to be completed by 2005. This will represent an in-kind contribution of volunteer labor from approximately 500 Rotary members, and will be a major project for a two-year period for the six Rotary clubs. They will be working with other local business for contributions to the North Path project, including members of the local sand and gravel industry.

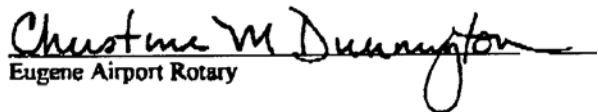

Eugene Delta Rotary


Southtowne Rotary


Eugene Metropolitan Rotary


Eugene Emerald Rotary


Mid-Valley Rotary


Eugene Airport Rotary

Northwest Youth Corps. Looking for educational and work opportunities for youth up to age 22. Provide work crews on a fee for service basis. Very interested in working with the City to incorporate Delta Ponds area into their program. (May also bring Foundation Grants to table) Students do 1 week education, 1 week field /community service, which involves work crews.



Northwest Youth Corps

Northwest Steelheaders. This group is interested in volunteering on work projects at Delta Ponds that will help improve fish habitat. (“saw and nails labor”)



Northwest Steelheaders

Lane Metro Youth. Willing to provide work crews on a fee for service or in-kind basis, to help with trail maintenance and non-native species control.



Lane Metro Youth

Lane County Audubon Society. The Society includes 1100 households as members, and is interested in providing volunteer help for bird identification, work that supports bird habitat, and native vegetation improvement. More specifically, they are willing to: (1) help develop and review interpretive materials [signs, handouts, checklists, including helping on an audio guide for those with sight loss; (2) help develop bird and dragonfly checklists; (3) lead a couple trips a year to the ponds, including a special program for the Friends of Delta Ponds and residents of the adjacent apartment complex.



Lane County Audubon

City of Eugene Parks and Open Space Division. The City will provide overall management of maintenance for the Delta Ponds area, and will, through the Stream Team, provide supervision of volunteer groups working on the project.



City of Eugene Public Works Dept.

Eugene Downtown Lions Club. The Eugene Downtown Lions have provided volunteer work parties twice a year at Delta Ponds, and would like to continue this effort at least for the immediate future.



Eugene Downtown Lions Club

Lynda Christensen. Lynda is a private citizen and volunteer who has been reading the water monitors at the ponds and will continue to provide this volunteer service.



Lynda Christensen

Lane Independent Living Alliance (LILA). This group provides advocacy for persons with physical or other disabilities, and is providing input and consultation on project design to help ensure that the Delta Ponds area can be enjoyed by persons with disabilities.



Lane Independent Living Alliance

Other Public Sector Support

Oregon Community Solutions Office. This State of Oregon office oversees the work of the regional Economic Revitalization Team, which includes the Division of State Lands,

Transportation, Economic and Community Development, Land Conservation and Development Department, and DEQ (among others), and is committed to working with the City and the Delta Ponds partners to facilitate the project. This includes regulatory coordination, helping ensure a unified response from the State, and looking for other funding programs to add to the project.


Oregon Community Solutions Office

In addition, *Lane County Public Works Department* has been working with the City to facilitate transfer of land for the project and to ensure that their engineers understand the natural resource issues at Delta Ponds. A survey of the area has taken place and the Public Works Department plans to take a proposal to the Board of Commissioners this fall. Lane County will also represent during project planning the transportation issues associated with long-term operation of Delta Highway.)

Other Private Sector Support


McKenzie River Broadcasting. This company, which owns land in the Delta Ponds project area, is providing land and easements to support the project.


McKenzie River Broadcasting


Eugene County Club. The Eugene Country Club is located upstream of the Delta Ponds on Dedrick Slough. The Country Club is committed to best management practices to minimize contribution of nutrients or other pollutants into Dedrick Slough, and the ponds. ECC is interested in working with the City of Eugene's Stormwater Program and the Neighborhood association to educate residents on best management practices for applying fertilizers or pesticides to lawns and/or planted areas.


Eugene Country Club

The Pape' Group. This company has its headquarters adjacent to one of the Delta Ponds, can see the ponds from their offices, and have been previously involved in Delta Ponds planning. The Pape' Group will be working with the City of Eugene and local Rotary clubs to determine how they can most effectively contribute to the project.


The Pape' Group

Valley River Inn. The Valley River Inn, within walking and biking distance to the ponds, wishes to contribute financial, promotional, and/or volunteer resources to help make the Delta Ponds a place the community can be proud of and which provides a nearby recreation opportunity.


The Valley River Inn

River Terrace Apartments. The River Terrace apartment complex is adjacent to the proposed North Path. The management at River Terrace will coordinate with the City on planning of the North Path, and will talk with their ownership group about a financial or in-kind contribution to the project.



River Terrace Apartments

