

# **Renewable Energy & Eastern Oregon Landscape Conservation Partnership**

Monday November 15<sup>th</sup>

## **MEETING NOTES**

### **ACTION ITEMS & NEXT STEPS**

- Create working group(s) to research mitigation strategies
- Determine what data is available and where the gaps are to create mitigation strategies
- Further engage Counties in information sharing and outreach of the Partnership
- Consider how to further engage renewable energy developers and ranching/private landowner community
- Update to website to include Panel Powerpoint presentations and other Symposium documents
- Next meeting to be held Mid-December

### **BRIEF MEETING SUMMARY**

Overview of Agenda and Introductions

Renewable Energy & Eastern Oregon Symposium 11/9/10 in Bend

- Opportunities and Challenges-Review Chart and Handout

Reflections around Symposium: a lot was learned through the panels and it was successful at providing participants access to a diverse set of information. It would be helpful to have more County outreach following the Symposium to make sure local planning staff and other actors are included in further discussions around permitting and mitigation issues. Don't want to lose momentum, need to keep seeking solutions collaboratively. A key consideration is how to better share information and move forward in a more consistent fashion.

Reviewed the opportunities and challenges charts that came out of the facilitated discussion at the end of the Symposium. There was clear direction from that session that mitigation strategies should be prioritized. Joe Zisa expanded on what may be the next steps in looking at mitigation;

- Identify the full suite of impacts from Renewable Energy Projects
- Identify on the grounds measures and a mitigation framework to offset impacts to sage grouse and golden eagles
- Develop a framework and metrics to evaluate and monitor mitigation projects
- Develop habitat metrics for finer scale assessment of impacts at a project specific level

In determining the scope of the Partnership, the team discussed investigating further the overlap of wind resources with ODFW Category 1 and 2 habitat revisions that have been presented to the Fish and Game Commission for consideration. The focus should be on intersections with renewable energy siting (not ranching practices at this stage). In addition, interest in better understanding how those resources overlap with private vs. public land. USFWS reminded the team that the threat of Sage Grouse being listed through ESA is not limited to Oregon. ODFW mentioned that adoption is being deferred for the revisions to Sage Grouse Assessment and Conservation Strategy.

Next Steps:

### Expanding the Partnership

The team seeks to identify opportunities to create a landscape scale conservation plan. A statewide energy plan is also needed to guide development, such as the Oregon Conservation Strategy, and provide more specificity. The challenge will be to balance protection and conservation of species with the need for renewable energy development. It is optimal to seek more certainty for both. Need to determine a research approach to assess actual impacts.

Another consideration is identifying a collaborative governance structure for the Partnership and the related discussions.

### Work Groups

The key issues the Partnership can consider/act on at this time seem to be mitigation and related data sharing . “Mitigation is what allows things to happen” with renewable energy projects, but “mitigation without a bigger landscape scale plan is hard to agree on”. Discussion touched on finding a path to consider landscape scale conservation and mitigation, perhaps a “renewable energy by siting/mitigation design at scale” approach. Discussed options to go beyond the Partnership to better research solutions around mitigation and related issues. Want to determine current data available as well as data gaps around mitigation information.

Data resides at state & fed agencies, Counties, environmental organizations and with renewable energy developers. A more complete inventory of data is ultimately needed if project mitigation is to be addressed at the project level.

Some of the on-going efforts to consider for data and to inform a discussion about mitigation include:

- Work and direction on ecosystem services and the SB 513 work group. (involves ODFW, BLM, OWEB, Ag Research Station, NRCS, TNC, etc).

- Defenders of Wildlife NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant to develop a metric for sagebrush habitat ecosystem services.
- RNWP – projects in Puget Sound and Kansas may be useful to review.

In terms of structure, the Partnership agreed that it would be best to create subcommittees/work groups to share data and information to better inform future mitigation strategies. The subcommittees and partnership will continue to be facilitated by NPCC. NPCC to develop a proposal for how to organize the Partnership and any work groups in the short term.

Discussion encouraged all to continue outreach to technical staff - in the field, in County staff and working with developers – and think about a timeline for a mitigation working group.

#### Other Issues

- Website-Oregon Solutions will be updating the Partnership website to include documents from the Symposium.

Meeting Convener: Mike Haske, BLM State Office Deputy Director

Meeting Participants:

Agency

Attendee

BLM	Mike Haske
BLM	Mark Brown
BLM	Bill O’Sullivan
BLM	Tim Barnes
AOC	Doris Penwell
AOC	Emily Ackland-by phone
Dept of State Lands	Lanny Quackenbush
ODFW	Eric Rickerson
ODOE	Lisa Pinheiro-by phone
US F&WS	Monty Knudsen
OFWO	Joe Zisa
USFS	Elaine Rybak
Renewable NW	John Audley
The Nature Conservancy	Cathy Macdonald
Defender of Wildlife	Bruce Taylor
CREA	Paul Woodin
Senator Merkley’s Office	Susanna Julber-by phone

Staff:

NPCC	Greg Wolf
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