

**OTHER OREGON CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AND INCENTIVES USED**

There are numerous examples of other incentive programs relying on private landowner conservation efforts that are taking place on a national level as well as a state level, and these programs would not be effective without the collaboration, public education, and involvement from all relevant stakeholders.

The State of Oregon in cooperation with other federal and Non-Governmental Organizations has developed numerous programs that financially incentivize conservation easements and protection of wildlife habitat through a multitude of different options that are available to private landowners. Things like cost-share programs and property tax benefits are prime examples of these types of financial incentive programs. In addition to the financial incentives, there are environmental incentives that are harder to quantify such as increased wildlife visitation, better habitat for large game, as well as the perpetual conservation of open spaces on or adjacent to agricultural lands.

Currently, the State of Oregon offers the following incentive based programs for landowners or other stakeholders:

- 1. Watershed Enhancement Programs** - The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board offers grants and technical assistance to landowners who seek funding or advice and assistance in developing a project that contributes to either the improved health of a stream, lake or reservoir and toward the achievement of standards that satisfy the requirements of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act; or the restoration of wildlife, habitat or native fish. These programs help to improve habitat for wildlife and native fish. *Incentive: Direct Financial Payments, Education/Technical Assistance*
- 2. Restoration and Enhancement Program** - Landowners may receive funds to implement fish restoration or enhancement projects through the program (est.1989), which is run by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The funding source for the program is a surcharge on all sport fishing licenses and commercial salmon fishing licenses and poundage fees. Recreational fees account for 90% of the revenue, generated and commercial fees generate 10%. Note: Grant recipients under this program are public or private non-profit organizations, however the program operates on private land. *Incentive: Direct Financial Payments*
- 3. Access and Habitat Program** – The program is designed to improve both wildlife habitat and public hunting access on private lands. Landowners submit project proposals to the Access and Habitat Board for projects such as improving vegetation on wild lands and reclaiming habitat by restricting vehicle access. The two most important criteria for approval are potential benefit to wildlife habitat and improvement of public hunting opportunities. Funding is provided by a surcharge on hunting licenses. *Incentives: Direct Financial Payments.*
- 4. The Oregon Forest Resource Trust** - The Department of Forestry offers direct cost payments and technical assistance under the program. To qualify lands must be at least

ten acres of under-producing forestlands - lands capable of growing forests but currently in brush, cropland, pasture or very poorly stocked and not subject to a reforestation requirement of the Oregon Forest Practices Act. Land must also be zoned forest or farm use land, and must be part of a private forestland ownership of no more than 5,000 acres. The landowner commits to establishing a healthy "free-to-grow" forest stand and takes responsibility for seeing that the reforestation gets done. If timber is harvested from the forests created with trust monies, participating landowners must repay the trust (up to set amounts) with a portion of the profits. Owners may receive up to 100% of the reforestation cost up to a cap of \$100,000 every two years. *Incentives: Direct Financial Payments, Education/Technical Assistance*

5. **Cost Share Assistance for Soil and Water Conservation** - The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, together with Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Department of Forestry, offers cost shares of up to 100% of funding for soil and water conservation as part of an adopted resource management plan. See ORS §541.375. *Incentives: Direct Financial Payments*
6. **Financial Incentives for Conservation** - A new law, H.B. 3564 (2001) creates a "Flexible Incentives Account" and directs the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to use the account to assist landowners in implementing conservation strategies. *Incentives: Direct Financial Payments*
7. **The Woodland Fish and Wildlife Projects** - Several state agencies offer technical assistance to landowners who wish to improve fish and wildlife habitat on woodlands. The projects are assisted by agencies in both Oregon and Washington, and federal agencies. *Incentives: Education/Technical Assistance*
8. **Property Tax Benefits for Conservation Easements and Wildlife Habitat Conservation** - Conservation easements are statutorily authorized and offer property tax benefits. Landowners with a conservation easement approved by the Department of Fish and Wildlife can apply to the county assessor for open space use assessment of the property. See ORS§ 271.715; H.B. 3564 (2001). In addition, H.B. 3564 gives tax relief to landowners who enter into approved wildlife habitat conservation management plans. *Incentives: Property Rights Tools, Tax Relief*
9. **Coordination of Incentives** - A new law, H.B. 3564 (2001), establishes a statewide strategy for the implementation and coordination of incentives, regulatory disincentives, expedited permit processes and related taxes. *Incentives: Process Streamlining*
10. **The Riparian Land Tax Incentive Program** - The Department of Fish and Wildlife offers landowners property tax benefits under the program (est. 1981), if they agree to follow a riparian management plan, which will preserve, enhance or restore a riparian area. See ORS §308A.350 - 308A.383. Landowners receive a complete property tax exemption for their riparian property and can include up to 100 feet from a stream. Owners of agricultural, forest and lands within urban growth boundaries, if individual

cities choose to participate, may qualify. The landowner must sign an agreement with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, which details measures that the landowner will implement. The program has had 113 overall participants with 1 last year. There are a total of 1,061 acres, and 77 miles of riparian stream covered. Many riparian dependent species are benefitting including all types of fish and many species of wildlife.  
*Incentives: Tax Relief*

**11. The Wildlife Habitat Conservation and Management Program** - The Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) offers property tax benefits to owners of forest, farm-forest and exclusive farm use. See ORS §215.808. The program began as a pilot program in two counties in 1993 and was available statewide in 1997, and benefits all types of species of fish and wildlife. In order to qualify, the land must be either entered into a wildlife habitat conservation and management plan or be under an executed conservation easement. Additionally, the county in which the land is located must be willing to allow establishment of wildlife habitat conservation and management plans and the land must be included in approved applicable zoning for tax deferral. After the wildlife habitat conservation and management plan has been approved by ODFW, the landowner may apply to the county assessor for open space use assessment. There are currently 30,000 acres enrolled in the program, with 155 participants. *Incentives: Tax Relief, Property Rights Tools*

**12. Property Tax Benefits for Forest and Woodland** - Landowners may receive property tax benefits for keeping land in forest or woodland use. See ORS §321.262. *Incentives: Tax Relief*

**13. The Oregon Under-Productive Forestland Conversion Tax Credit** - Owners of brushland, grassland or very poorly stocked forestland may qualify for the credit through the Department of Forestry. The credit pays 50% of the cost of establishing a stand of trees on under-productive forestland, which may be applied as a credit against Oregon state taxes for projects started in or after 2001. Projects started before 2001 may be eligible for 30% credit. *Incentives: Tax Relief*

**14. Property Tax Benefits for Open Space Conservation** - Owners of open space lands may qualify for property tax benefits for the land's conservation. ORS §308A.300, et seq. *Incentives: Tax Relief*