

**Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
Oregon Plan Annual Implementation Report  
January 1, 2000 – March 31, 2001**

In lieu of measures developed for the Coastal Salmon Restoration Initiative and Steelhead Supplement, OWEB will evaluate its Oregon Plan implementation success based on the OWEB Strategic Plan. This document, approved by the Board at its January 4-5 Board meeting, presents the Board's vision for OWEB through three broad outcomes that will move Oregon toward OWEB's vision for sustainable, healthy watersheds. To achieve these outcomes, OWEB has identified eleven strategies that the Board will seek to implement. It is upon these strategies that OWEB will evaluate its successes and shortcomings in implementing the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds (OPSW).

1. Frame a statewide strategy: Coordinate effective investments in watershed health with restoration planning efforts
  - Watershed assessments: OWEB is targeting funds to work with councils to complete watershed assessments statewide, particularly in priority areas, which include the John Day, Grande Ronde, Umatilla, Deschutes, Hood River, and Willamette Basins, and minor tributaries to the Columbia.
  - Streamflow restoration priorities: OWEB contracted with ODFW and WRD to identify, by hydrologic basin, those areas most limited by streamflow for the production of aquatic species. Maps of priority streamflow restoration were made for each basin in the state.
  - Watershed restoration: OWEB held two meetings with a broad advisory group to develop guidance for watershed restoration.
  - Willamette Restoration Initiative (WRI): WRI developed a strategy for the Willamette River. OWEB met with the group and discussed potential partner roles in implementing the plan.
  - Natural Heritage Advisory Council: OWEB invested funds in the Natural Heritage Advisory Council's development of a centralized information database on sensitive, threatened and endangered species.

Evaluation: The foundation of a statewide strategy is just started. There is a significant work effort necessary to provide a clear framework for watershed council activities and to effectively coordinate state and federal agency efforts. These efforts will assist in targeting investments in support of OPSW in 01-02.

OWEB is pushing for completion of watershed assessments throughout the state, but realizes that a major disparity exists between assessment theory and assessment implementation. Assessments widely differ in quality, depending on the group or individual completing them. It will be necessary for OWEB to concentrate efforts in the next biennium to develop a restoration plan protocol that comes out of the assessment work.

2. Integrate local priorities: Locally sponsored priorities and plans will coordinate restoration projects to support a statewide watershed strategy
  - Small grant program: A subcommittee of the OWEB Board worked this year on the development of an enhanced small grant program to provide greater support to landowners, councils and SWCDs in their local watershed restoration efforts. A small grant program would make grants more accessible to projects requiring a relatively small amount of funds and would support local project priorities, restoration needs and partnerships. Early in 2001, the Board initiated rulemaking to create the small grant program.
  - Priority for funding: Projects based on watershed assessments are given a priority in the grant evaluation process.
  - Technical Assistance: Technical assistance grants were awarded as a priority for areas where there was local collaboration between WSCs and SWCDs.
  - Southwest Oregon regional priorities: OWEB staff have participated with a process in the Rogue and South Coast Basins to evaluate restoration priorities and effectiveness of restoration efforts.
  - Central Oregon regional priorities: OWEB staff have participated in and facilitated the development of regional restoration priorities in the Central Oregon region.

Evaluation: OWEB is in the final stages of developing a small grant program. A rules advisory committee is currently meeting to draft rules. Completion of the small grant program will be a significant step toward integrating local priorities and will provide a clear mechanism to support SB 1010 implementation. OWEB has significant work to do to provide local watershed councils with a common approach to develop restoration priorities.

OWEB places great importance on watershed assessments, but currently does not have a uniform mechanism for using assessments in prioritizing funding for projects.

3. Monitor progress: Comprehensive monitoring plan, based on shared protocols for collecting and managing data, will provide information on watershed conditions across Oregon
  - Database: OWEB has developed a comprehensive database system for monitoring restoration projects current efforts to coordinate the use of the database with federal agencies has expanded.
  - Oregon Plan Monitoring Team: OWEB partnered with the Oregon Plan Monitoring Team to provide a technical guidebook for citizens and local groups in monitoring local water quality conditions in their watershed. OWEB is also working with OPMT to develop a monitoring strategy report. This report will specify OWEB's role in monitoring watershed restoration effectiveness.
  - Fish Monitoring in the Southwest Region: OWEB invested funds in fish monitoring projects critical to evaluating restoration effectiveness in the Rogue Basin and South Coast.
  - Fish Monitoring Coverage Under ESA 4(d) Rules: OWEB continues the ongoing process of coordinating with ODFW and watershed councils to obtain coverage for fish monitoring activities under the ESA 4(d) Rules Research Limit.
  - Watershed Restoration Inventory: OWEB worked in cooperation with COE, DSL, USFWS to establish restoration project reporting requirements for the "Rocks and Sticks" Regional General Permit. In addition, OWEB developed an Annual Report, which is a continuing summary report of watershed restoration activities statewide.
  - Effectiveness Monitoring Strategy: OWEB is participating with the Oregon Plan Monitoring Team to develop a restoration effectiveness monitoring strategy.
  - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP): OWEB is working to develop an effectiveness monitoring plan for CREP to provide information on ecological value of the program and opportunities for improvement.

Evaluation: OWEB has established a foundation for comprehensive monitoring of restoration activities. More effective coordination of this effort with federal agencies is necessary. The 2001 Legislature bestowed new monitoring authority on OWEB with the passage of SB 945. This bill, and the staff added to accomplish it, will result in a development of a comprehensive effectiveness monitoring program for the OPSW.

OWEB has just started work on an effectiveness monitoring strategy but remains far from implementing it. OWEB has used the grant program to focus on implementation and compliance monitoring.

4. Exchange information: Clearinghouse of information on watershed conditions in Oregon will promote the use of shared data protocols and serve all local, state and federal partners in restoration
  - Oregon Plan Monitoring Team: OWEB partnered with OPMT to provide guidance for citizens and local groups on using standard data protocols in collecting water quality data.
  - Annual Watershed Restoration Inventory: OWEB provides information on the progress of local watershed restoration work being done by citizens, agencies, and others statewide in the Annual Watershed Restoration Inventory report.
  - OWEB on the Web: OWEB launched a comprehensive Web site offering a range of information about watershed enhancement.
  - Consistent stream mapping: OWEB is working with WRD to develop consistent 1:24,000 maps of streams throughout the state. The mapping standards have been coordinated with state and federal agencies for consistency. OWEB has also entered into an agreement with ODFW to map anadromous fish at 1:24,000 scale.
  - Watershed assessments: OWEB staff have compiled a library of watershed assessments from across the state.

Evaluation: OWEB has just started work on this strategy. The Legislature gave OWEB new authority under SB 946 to enhance coordination of information exchange. This bill, passed in July 2001, directs OWEB to coordinate information, data and data retrieval needs of state natural resource agencies with the Oregon Geospatial Data Clearinghouse (OGDC). This authority, along with the work of the Oregon Geographic Information Council (OGIC) and the OSU Natural Resources Institute, will eventually reframe the manner in which Oregon makes information supporting the OPSW available. OWEB does not have an effective clearinghouse of information on watershed conditions.

5. Report results: Public investments in watershed health will be reported clearly, and the relationship between Oregon's investments and the economic well-being of communities will be promoted
  - GIS: OWEB integrated project information in a GIS database as a way to spatially display OWEB's investments and activities by region.
  - Watershed Restoration Inventory: An annual report of the Inventory provides a picture of the type of watershed work that is

happening statewide to help determine the effectiveness of OWEB investments.

- Grant tracking: OWEB systematically tracks the status of all grants and reports the amount of funds being used for restoration activities and capacity building projects.
- Reporting: OWEB worked on the development of a consistent format for federal and state reporting of watershed restoration activities on a basin-wide scale.
- Community Economic Development Agenda: OWEB hired the Ecosystem Workforce Program to complete a study on OWEB's contribution to the community development agenda in Oregon. This report analyzes the effect OWEB funds have on the economy of local communities.
- Log placement work: OWEB coordinated with state agencies to report the placement of logs instream as part of restoration projects to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as required by the recently developed regional general permit for log placement.
- Web site: OWEB established a Web site to post Board activities and grant information.

Evaluation: OWEB is making great strides in GIS development; however, progress is dependent upon many others in addition to OWEB. GIS projects are limited to existing data themes produced by other agencies. Reporting of Board activities on the web has been effectively implemented. Reporting of watershed assessments results could be enhanced. Additional cooperative work on watershed restoration effectiveness needs to be focused on. Efforts to achieve this strategy are being integrated into Strategies 3 and 4.

Although many agencies, companies and local groups report results to the Watershed Restoration Inventory, some groups underreport, particularly the agriculture community. In addition, better cooperation with federal programs could enhance reporting.

6. Establish shared government priorities: Oregon public boards and commissions will share priorities with federal agencies for supporting watershed enhancement work, and this will be demonstrated by coordination of agency programs within watersheds
  - Grant review: State and federal agencies, OSU Extension, and others with knowledge of local conditions come together to review applications for watershed restoration grant funds in order to make investment recommendations to the Board.

- Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund: OWEB allocates funds to restoration efforts for the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds, and coordinates public agency use of these funds for high priority initiatives that support broad Oregon Plan objectives. In 2000, OWEB used these funds to support initiatives sponsored by seven state agencies.
- Partnerships: OWEB established partnerships with other state agencies that serve common agency goals. The Board also increased its interaction with state boards and commissions, particularly ODA and WRD.
- Weed projects: The OWEB Board joined together with ODA and the Weed Board to conduct a public forum highlighting local restoration efforts and to discuss common priorities.
- Watershed Restoration Inventory: OWEB maintains a Watershed Restoration Inventory that collects and coordinates information on the progress of local efforts to provide a comprehensive view of combined accomplishments.
- Streamflow restoration priorities: OWEB contracted with ODFW and WRD to identify, by hydrologic basin, those areas most limited by streamflow for the production of aquatic species. Maps of priority streamflow restoration were made for each basin in the state.
- Stream mapping system: OWEB funded a cooperative effort between federal and state agencies to develop a uniform stream mapping system.
- Fish distribution: ODFW initiated a uniform system of mapping fish distribution at 1:24,000 scale statewide using OWEB funding.

Evaluation: OWEB has done important work to achieve this strategy, but there is much work left to do. Establishing shared government priorities will be a challenge, but OWEB will be working hard to establish more proactive and effective partnerships with other state and federal agencies in 01-02.

7. Enhance Public/Private Relationships: Relationships between public and private interests will support watershed health by targeting funds to shared priorities, producing incentives for local participation, and providing tools and materials for watershed enhancement.
  - 25 percent match: Grants require a minimum 25 percent match of OWEB funds by private or other entities, which can be either in-kind support or cash.

- Federal funds: OWEB secured additional funds to supplement Oregon's investment in watershed health. OWEB received funds from NOAA and USFWS to augment state investments.
- Salmon-Friendly Power: OWEB entered into agreements with Portland General Electric, Salem Electric, and the Pacific Salmon Watershed Fund Board to provide additional restoration funds to purchase salmon-friendly power.
- Salmon License Plates: OWEB invests funds generated by the sale of salmon license plates in restoration projects that address transportation-related impacts.
- Outreach: OWEB conducts grant writing and fiscal management workshops that provide tools for watershed councils, SWCDs and other entities to secure funds for watershed enhancement.
- Watershed Council Self-evaluation: OWEB developed watershed council self-evaluation methodology to provide watershed councils with a tool for measuring their success.

Evaluation: There is a lot of potential for OWEB to accomplish this strategy. The collaboration that produced salmon-friendly power was a major accomplishment for OWEB and the other entities involved, but staffing limitations to date have held back progress. So far, these partnerships have not generated significant funds.

8. Promote local partnerships: OWEB incentives and programs will promote fully developed partnerships and coordination between watershed councils, soil and water conservation districts, tribes and others who support landowner restoration efforts
  - Watershed council partnerships: OWEB encourages watershed councils to share coordinators and project assistance in order to leverage available expertise and resources.
  - Community-building training: OWEB holds workshops and meetings for councils and other groups on citizen outreach, meeting management, dispute resolution and fiscal management.
  - Watershed Stewardship Education Program: OWEB has been involved with WSEP to provide training and guidance to local groups for watershed enhancement and care.
  - Small grant program: A subcommittee of the OWEB Board worked this year on the development of an enhanced small grant program to provide greater support to landowners, councils and SWCDs in their local watershed restoration efforts. A small grant program would make grants more accessible to projects requiring a relatively small amount of funds and would support local project

priorities, restoration needs and partnerships. Early in 2001, the Board initiated rulemaking to create a small grant program.

- Technical Assistance Grants: OWEB funded technical assistance grants that focus on enhancing technical capacity with a priority for strong SWCD and watershed council relationships.

Evaluation: There still remains much work to do on this strategy. Local partnerships are blossoming in some areas, but remain spotty in others. There currently is no method for regional review teams to consider the number of partners when screening funding proposals during the grant review process.

Technical assistance to local groups conducting watershed restoration activities has long been identified as a limiting factor to implementation. OWEB has awarded technical assistance grants on a limited basis but now needs to determine the effectiveness these grants have on watershed restoration activities and how to identify and make additional resources available.

A fundamental effort for the watershed council program is to establish stable funding for watershed council support. To date, OWEB has been able to stabilize funding at the 99-01 level of \$4.1 million. This level has led to significant shortages throughout the state.

9. Initiate Research: Research projects will advance state and local priorities for understanding and achieving watershed health
  - Research priorities: IMST began development of research priorities for OWEB to consider.
  - Research funding: OWEB formed a Board subcommittee to develop a strategic investment plan to address research needs to support Oregon Plan implementation. The plan will guide OWEB's allocation of funds from the Restoration and Protection Research Fund toward priorities established by the IMST.

Evaluation: OWEB has put a research investment plan in place. Currently, a process is being implemented for long-term research investments.

10. Support local education efforts: OWEB will promote the role of watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts to undertake local outreach and education efforts

- Statewide Conference: OWEB hosts a biennial statewide conference convening watershed councils, SWCDs, and citizens to discuss progress, share lessons learned, and develop more effective approaches to restoration. In 2000, OWEB hosted the Ridgetop to Ridgetop Conference in cooperation with OACD. The conference drew over 600 participants and featured local accomplishments.
- Workshops: OWEB sponsors workshops for councils, SWCDs, and others on building technical restoration skills, including watershed assessment, fish passage improvement, and the use of geographic information systems.
- Provides community-building training for councils and SWCDs on citizen outreach, meeting management, dispute resolution and fiscal management.
- Outreach: OWEB funds community outreach tools, such as council newsletters.

Evaluation: OWEB has started to develop a solid foundation for supporting Strategies 10 and 11, but much work stills needs to be done to meet unrealized potential.

11. Reach out to citizens and youth: Citizen understanding of watershed health will be advanced through outreach and education opportunities for the general public and youth
- Education in schools: OWEB has funded development of comprehensive education curricula on watershed function and supports workshops for K-12 teachers on using watershed education curriculum in class and doing hands-on projects.
  - Oregon Trout Salmon Watch Program: OWEB supports the Oregon Trout Salmon Watch Program that brings students outdoors to see and learn about spawning salmon.
  - Landowner workshops: OWEB funds workshops for landowners on innovative approaches to watershed conservation and restoration.
  - WEST Program: OWEB funds the Oregon Cattlemen's Association WEST Program to enhance landowner understanding of watershed and riparian function and water quality monitoring protocols.
  - WSEP: OWEB supports the Watershed Stewardship Education Program provided by the OSU Extension Service designed to help residents and volunteers be good stewards of their watersheds.

Evaluation: See evaluation for Strategy 10.

