

August 28, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Ken Bierly, Deputy Director

**SUBJECT: Agenda Item M: Restoration Priorities Adoption
September 19-20, 2006 OWEB Board Meeting**

I. Introduction

This staff report asks the Board to adopt the format and approach to regional priorities for restoration projects for the Hood and Fifteenmile basins and provides an update on other Columbia Basin restoration priorities. The priorities are intended to be used as guidance by OWEB in the review of grant applications and to help ensure a clear and strategic approach to prioritizing the funding of projects. Formal administrative rules will be proposed to define how the priorities will be used when priorities are completed for the whole state.

II. Background

The Board has identified the development of funding priorities as a significant need for project review and evaluation in OWEB's grant program. In September 2002, the Board authorized staff to contract for the facilitation of efforts to develop restoration priorities in two pilot basins.

Staff reported on the process for developing priorities at the January 2006 Board meeting. In each basin, a local working group has been meeting and developing proposed priorities with the assistance of a consultant. Each working group has developed a list of limiting factors and has identified priorities for watershed geography, typically at the watershed (Hydrologic Unit Code or HUC 5) scale.

III. Status and Approach

The Hood and Fifteenmile basins restoration priorities project was contracted to Watershed Professionals Network, who has reviewed the subbasin plans for each of the drainages in the basin and has developed a crosswalk between the Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment (EDT) analysis and the proposed restoration priorities. (Attachment A) The EDT is a stream based approach to modeling limiting factors for target salmon species. The crosswalk helps to broaden the range of priorities and specifically include upland habitat priorities.

Attachment B shows the limiting factors matrix for the Hood and Fifteenmile basins. A discussion of the approach that converts the analysis of habitat conditions to limiting factors is provided in Attachment A.

Following discussions with local conservation partners, this form makes sense with the following change: the Hood Basin priorities are appropriate but they would prefer smaller divisions of the basin (6th field HUCs). With the proposed changes the OWEB matrix will closely reflect the recently drafted Hood Basin Aquatic Habitat Restoration Strategy with additions to address upland habitat conditions. A minor change to the Fifteenmile Basin limiting factors to include recent information about the presence of pesticides in the watershed had made it complete given today's information about the basin.

The Hood and Fifteenmile Basins Limiting Factors Summary matrix is also available on the OWEB web site at www.oregon.gov/OWEB/restoration_priorities.shtml.

IV. Columbia Basin Next Steps

The approach and content of the most recent two restoration priorities for the Columbia Basin are part of a series of products proposed for use from subbasin plans developed by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council. OWEB staff has contracted with a consultant to take the analysis used in the development of subbasin plans and systematically convert the information into restoration priorities. The delivery schedule below identifies the approximate times that draft products will be available. OWEB staff will review the draft products with local conservation groups before bringing them to the Board.

Delivery Schedule for Restoration Priority Products

Date	Basin
August 25, 2006	Deschutes
September 8, 2006	Malheur
September 8, 2006	John Day
September 22, 2006	Grande Ronde
October 6, 2006	Owyhee
October 20, 2006	Powder
October 27, 2006	Umatilla
October 27, 2006	Walla Walla

V. Recommendation

Staff request the Board approve the approach and content of the Hood and Fifteenmile basins regional restoration priorities.

Attachments

- A. EDT Limiting Factors Cross Walk Memo
- B. Hood and Fifteenmile Basins Limiting Factors Matrix