



# *the* OREGON CONSERVATION STRATEGY



## Chapter 1: Overview



2016  
Oregon Department  
of Fish and Wildlife



[OregonConservationStrategy.org](http://OregonConservationStrategy.org)

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This PDF is a chapter of the Oregon Conservation Strategy, the official State Wildlife Action Plan for Oregon. The complete Oregon Conservation Strategy is available online at <http://oregonconservationstrategy.org/>. Since Conservation Strategy content will be updated periodically, please check the website to ensure that you are using the most current version of downloadable files.

## Contact ODFW

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Featured image: Conservation Opportunity Area 107 within Mount Hood National Forest, Susan Barnes, ODFW



*Photo Credit: ODFW*

## OVERVIEW

**The Oregon Conservation Strategy is a blueprint for conservation in Oregon.**

The Oregon Conservation Strategy (also referred to as the Conservation Strategy or Strategy) is an overarching state strategy for conserving fish and wildlife. It provides a shared set of priorities for addressing Oregon's conservation needs. The Conservation Strategy brings together the best available scientific information, and presents a menu of recommended voluntary actions and tools for all Oregonians to define their own conservation role.

The goals of the Conservation Strategy are to maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations by maintaining and restoring functioning habitats, preventing declines of at-risk species, and reversing declines in these resources where possible.

## STRATEGY COMPONENTS

- **Key Conservation Issues** are landscape-scale threats that impact species and habitats throughout the entire state.
- **Ecoregions** are delineated areas of the state with similar climate and vegetation. General characteristics, limiting factors, and recommended conservation actions are described for each of the nine ecoregions in Oregon.
- **Conservation Opportunity Areas** help focus conservation efforts and financial investments in specific areas to increase the likelihood of long-term success over larger landscapes.
- **Strategy Habitats** are native habitats of conservation concern that are essential to many Strategy Species within the state. A conservation overview, and list of limiting factors, recommended conservation actions, and available resources, is provided for each of the 11 Strategy Habitats.

- **Strategy Species** are species of greatest conservation need that include wildlife, fish, invertebrates, plants, and algae. Information about special needs, limiting factors, data gaps, conservation actions, and available resources is provided for each of the 294 Strategy Species.
- **Monitoring** includes strategies and guidance, citizen science, and data management on Strategy Species and Strategy Habitats statewide.
- **Conservation Toolbox** describes recommendations for conservation in urban areas, education and outreach, information about Oregon’s planning and regulatory framework, and a list of voluntary conservation programs.
- **Oregon Nearshore Strategy** provides detailed information about Oregon’s nearshore environment.





*Photo Credit: ODFW*

# BACKGROUND

## INTRODUCTION

The Oregon Conservation Strategy represents Oregon's first overarching state strategy for conserving fish and wildlife. It uses the best available science to create a broad vision and conceptual framework for long-term conservation of Oregon's native fish and wildlife, as well as various invertebrates, plants, and algae.

The Conservation Strategy emphasizes proactively conserving declining species and habitats to reduce the possibility of future federal or state listings. It is not a regulatory document but instead presents issues, opportunities, and recommended voluntary actions that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of conservation in Oregon.

Most importantly, it establishes the basis for a common understanding of the challenges facing Oregon's fish and wildlife, and provides a shared set of priorities for addressing the state's conservation needs. The heart of the Conservation Strategy is a blueprint for voluntary action to address the long-term needs of Oregon's fish and wildlife. The future for many species will depend on landowners' and land managers' willingness to voluntarily take action on their own to protect and improve fish and wildlife habitat.

### **Oregon Conservation Strategy Goals:**

1. Maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations by maintaining and restoring functioning habitats.
2. Prevent declines of at-risk species.
3. Reverse declines in these resources where possible.

The Conservation Strategy is not a management plan for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. It is a broad strategy for all Oregonians, offering potential roles and opportunities for citizens, private landowners, organizations, and agencies alike. It incorporates information and insights from a broad

range of natural resources assessments and conservation plans, supplemented by the professional expertise and practical experiences of a cross-section of Oregon's resource managers and conservation interests. Healthy fish and wildlife populations require adequate habitat, which is provided in natural systems and in landscapes managed for forestry, agriculture, range, and urban uses.

This document is called a strategy, not a plan, because its purpose is to help people make decisions more strategically about how they can invest time and resources in fish and wildlife conservation. The intent is for localized or species-specific plans to tier off of the broader, overarching Conservation Strategy.

### **Oregon's Unique Natural Heritage**

Oregonians have always been proud of the place they live, proud of the diversity of landscapes and people, and of Oregon's strong ties to our fish and wildlife. The Oregon Conservation Strategy celebrates Oregon's natural heritage by outlining goals and identifying actions that conserve and restore Oregon's species, habitats, and ecosystems. The recommendations within the Strategy can be used to address species and habitat conservation needs, expand existing partnerships and develop new ones, and provide a context for balancing Oregon's conservation and development priorities.

Oregon is a melting pot of traditions, cultures, ecological regions, geological formations, and political ideologies. Oregon's varied geology, soil, and climate support a unique collection of species and habitats, which help define the state's culture and economy. Oregon's prosperity depends on use of land for agriculture, timber, industry, ranching, and outdoor recreation. These working landscapes, along with wilderness and other natural areas, provide the rich mix of habitat that supports Oregon's fish and wildlife.

There are, however, significant challenges to maintaining Oregon's fish and wildlife. Habitats have been fragmented or degraded by construction of towns and roads, alteration of river systems, and intensive land management practices. Some areas have been completely converted to other uses. While not all land conversion results in habitat loss, the changes people have made to habitats can isolate fish and wildlife habitats into increasingly smaller patches, limit the functions that habitats provide for species, and ultimately make it more difficult for ecosystems to provide the services that define Oregon's history, culture, and economy.

The Strategy provides an adaptive and comprehensive framework for continued positive action and new innovation. Building upon previous plans, it provides a menu of recommended voluntary actions and tools to help inspire local communities, landowners, and citizens to define their own conservation role.

Oregonians have long demonstrated their willingness to work together for the common good. Tapping that spirit will encourage new alliances, partnerships, coordination, and collaboration among agencies, tribes, organizations, businesses, and landowners to take care of Oregon's unique natural treasures.

## OREGON CONSERVATION STRATEGY: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT CAN DO

The goals of the Oregon Conservation Strategy are to: 1) maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations by maintaining and restoring functioning habitats, 2) prevent declines of at-risk species, and 3) reverse declines in these resources where possible.

The Strategy is intended to provide a long-term, big-picture blueprint for conserving Oregon's natural resources for today and for future generations. It outlines how and where the state and its conservation partners, including landowners and land managers, can best focus this work. The Strategy is intended to:

- Prevent species from becoming imperiled, thereby reducing the risk of future species listings that could result in additional regulations for Oregon's businesses and industries.
- Provide a wide range of voluntary conservation tools, so local communities and landowners can choose what is appropriate for their situations and goals.
- Provide a common conservation vision to guide state and federal agencies toward effective coordination.
- Leverage limited conservation resources, such as money, equipment, and time, in a more efficient and effective manner by:
  - Focusing conservation actions on the species and habitats of greatest conservation priority
  - Identifying areas where conservation activities will provide the greatest benefit at the landscape scale
  - Increasing coordination, collaboration, and partnership to produce cumulative benefits
- Demonstrate how local conservation actions fit into a broader regional or statewide perspective.
- Provide a role for every Oregonian, from local neighborhood clean-ups to large-scale citizen-based monitoring.
- Encourage voluntary conservation and recognize contributions already made by landowners, land managers, and other entities.
- Increase the efficiency and conservation benefits of existing voluntary incentive programs, and identify additional needs.
- Provide guidance and coordination to preserve and restore the services provided by healthy ecosystems that benefit all Oregonians.
- Synthesize existing plans and credible, peer-reviewed science to provide a statewide context to address the state's conservation needs.

- Expand the successful voluntary approach of the *Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds* to maintain and restore upland areas for improved watershed function.
- Assist in managing landscapes to safeguard Oregon's high quality of life and natural resource legacy, which is one of the state's strengths in attracting and retaining businesses.
- Demonstrate Oregon's commitment to conserve its species and habitats.
- Increase coordination among states to address issues of common concern.
- Serve as a long-term strategy for the next decade and beyond, while still remaining a dynamic, living approach that will be adjusted as new information and insights are gained.

## OREGON CONSERVATION STRATEGY: WHAT IT IS NOT

The Strategy is not regulatory. It works within the existing legal structure and is not a substitute for regulations. It does not challenge, change, or expand regulations. It does not add any new regulations.

The Strategy is not restrictive. It will not impose limits or new requirements on private landowners or public land users. It is not intended to impose additional rules, fees, or processes. It instead encourages voluntary action and collaboration.

The Strategy is not a substitute for existing planning efforts. It synthesizes and builds upon existing planning efforts to weave them into a statewide framework for action. It also highlights ways to expand, enhance, and improve conservation work.

The Strategy is not an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife management plan. Rather, it is intended to be a conservation tool for all Oregonians. The issues identified in this document are often complex and cannot be solved by any one agency or entity. They require cooperative, coordinated approaches for long-term success.

### Scope of the 2016 Update

New science, resources, and available data were used to update all sections of the Strategy during the 10-year comprehensive revision of the Oregon Conservation Strategy. Particular focus was paid to priority sections of the Strategy that were identified by external partners and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) programs. These key focal areas consisted of: Strategy Species, Strategy Habitats, Key Conservation Issues, Monitoring, Conservation Opportunity Areas, and facilitating the use of the Strategy. Efforts included:

- The [Strategy Species](#) list was updated using current science and research.
- [Strategy Habitat](#) mapping was greatly improved using new technologies and incorporating ongoing monitoring projects.



- [Conservation Opportunity Areas](#) were updated and refined using data on Strategy Species, Strategy Habitats, and Key Conservation Issues.
- The Conservation Strategy's new web format facilitates user connections and movement between all sections of the Strategy, links to more specific, stepped-down planning efforts, and provides an opportunity to dynamically update supporting information on Strategy priorities.

## OREGON CONSERVATION STRATEGY: 10-YEAR REPORT

### Role of the Oregon Conservation Strategy Since 2006:

In the 10 years since the Conservation Strategy was first completed, it has continued to bring together diverse partners to identify common conservation priorities, encourage partnerships, and achieve conservation success, all without the need for regulation. Landowners, watershed councils, Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), conservation organizations, outdoor interest groups, tribes, state, federal, and local agency partners, and others find value in using a common set of priorities presented within the Strategy, including: Strategy Species, Strategy Habitats, Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs), and Key Conservation Issues. Consistent priorities and supporting information, such as mapping and reporting tools, help landowners and land managers take a strategic, big-picture view of Oregon's landscape. The Conservation Strategy has also served as an information source, providing an introduction to Oregon's conservation priorities and descriptions about natural resource issues and management approaches to various audiences.

### Coordinate Conservation Priorities:

Agencies, conservation organizations, public interest groups, and private citizens focus conservation efforts on the priorities identified in the Conservation Strategy. Some examples from the past decade include:

- The Oregon Board of Forestry uses the Strategy in their Forestry Program for Oregon.
- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) used the Strategy in their Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. This planning effort influences approximately 2.5 million acres of BLM-administered lands in western Oregon.
- The USFWS Surrogate Species Program used the Strategy Species list to help select surrogate species across the state.
- The Oregon Department of Transportation used the Strategy to help develop priorities for wildlife crossings.
- The collaborative Intertwine Alliance in the Portland area used the Strategy to develop a stepped-down [Regional Conservation Strategy](#).

- The [Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy](#) steps down from the overarching Conservation Strategy.
- The [Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan](#) steps down from the overarching Conservation Strategy.

#### **Focus Investments:**

Several funding organizations use Conservation Strategy priorities as scoring criteria to evaluate proposals for conservation funding and to direct investments on the ground. Strategy Species, Strategy Habitats, and COAs are often cited as justification for conservation and restoration project proposals. Since the Oregon Conservation Strategy was approved in 2006\*:

- ODFW has directed over \$20 million in State Wildlife Grants towards Conservation Strategy priority actions on the ground.
- ODFW's [Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program](#) (WWMP) was established in 2010 to work with the Bonneville Power Administration and the State of Oregon to purchase wildlife mitigation properties within the Willamette Valley. Since 2010, the WWMP acquisitions have included over 9,000 acres within Conservation Strategy COAs, with another 1,400 acres in progress.
- The Farm Bill uses the Conservation Strategy to inform priorities and federal funding opportunities for easements, including both wetland and upland areas.
- The [Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board](#), which administers funding for conservation and watershed enhancements, refers to the Conservation Strategy as an information source for grant applicants and has invested over \$122 million in conservation and restoration activities within COAs.
- The [U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program](#) uses the Conservation Strategy to assist in prioritizing funding for projects that improve fish and wildlife habitat in forestlands.
- The federal Forest Health Program uses COAs to evaluate grant proposals that address forest health.
- The [Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation](#) and its partners have undertaken projects to conserve and/or enhance habitat in over 14,000 acres within or near COAs.
- The [Conservation Registry](#) was established in 2008 as a way to record conservation actions across the landscape. It contains a record of nearly 6,000 unique projects, including habitat restoration, conservation, monitoring, research, and education happening within COAs.
- The [Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts](#) (COLT) has documented that over 32,000 acres of COLT properties have been protected within COAs, with an additional 16,000 acres having been protected by other land trusts and non-governmental organizations.

- Additionally, many conservation organizations, landowners, and local, state, and federal partners have invested in projects within or near COAs, or addressed Strategy Species and Strategy Habitats as part of other projects. For example, contributions from ranchers to water and wildlife conservation are described in the [Oregon Cattlemen’s Association conservation report](#).

*\*These numbers were calculated in the spring of 2015, and are provided as rounded numbers. Many projects are collaborative, and some projects or areas may be double-counted in these estimates.*

#### **Information Source:**

For readers with an interest in Oregon’s natural resources, the Conservation Strategy provides an introduction to conservation in Oregon and a summary of major conservation issues and priorities. Since the Oregon Conservation Strategy was approved in 2006:

- The information provided in the Strategy has been used by school programs, private landowners, and interested citizens to learn more about Oregon’s important natural resources and find a role in helping to conserve them.
- The Strategy has become an integral part of the [Oregon Master Naturalist curriculum](#), providing an introduction to Oregon’s natural history for each ecoregion.
- The [Oregon Forest Resources Institute](#) has incorporated information from the Strategy into identification guides for Strategy Species in managed forest habitats.
- The Conservation Strategy provided the ability to further prioritize species, habitats, and areas (COAs) within the ODFW Crucial Habitat Assessment project, part of the [Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool](#), a dynamic map defining crucial habitat for fish and wildlife consistently throughout the western states.

## **OREGON’S EXISTING PLANNING, REGULATORY, AND VOLUNTARY FRAMEWORK**

Oregon has an existing conservation framework in the form of plans, regulations, and grass-roots voluntary efforts. These processes have built the knowledge base, standards, and relationships that set the stage for creating a statewide conservation strategy. The Strategy has built upon this framework to promote common goals.

The Strategy works to promote integration and innovation within Oregon’s existing conservation framework, recognizing that many important conservation actions are covered by regulatory requirements, but other actions are voluntary, and incentives or market-based approaches can be quite helpful.

**Regulations** – State and federal laws govern issues such as water quality, air quality, land use, and species protection. For example, the legal and institutional framework for maintaining private forestland

is in place through the Oregon Board of Forestry's Forestry Program for Oregon, the Forest Practices Act, and statewide planning Goal 4, Forest Lands.

**Voluntary Efforts** – From counting birds during the annual Christmas Bird Count to planting willows in riparian areas, watershed councils, nonprofit organizations, private landowners, and other interested citizens are already contributing voluntarily to conserving Oregon's fish and wildlife through both organized and individual efforts.

**Plans** – Numerous planning efforts by a variety of entities have identified priority species, habitats, and actions within Oregon. These plans have all differed in their purposes, goals, and scales of analysis. Some examples of large-scale planning efforts include the *Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds* and The Nature Conservancy's Ecoregional Assessments.

The Strategy builds on all of these efforts to provide a framework for a cohesive, statewide, non-regulatory approach to habitat and species conservation. Implementation requires coordination among the state and federal agencies that implement existing regulations, and among a variety of groups that implement plans. The Strategy can also support and expand existing voluntary efforts. See the section on [Oregon's planning and regulatory framework](#) for more information.

## THE NATIONAL APPROACH

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requires each U.S. state and territory receiving State Wildlife Grants to complete a State Wildlife Action Plan (i.e., the Oregon Conservation Strategy) and to update that effort at least every 10 years.

The emphasis of each state strategy is on voluntary measures and collaboration. A state strategy that imposed additional regulation or adversely affected the state's economy and communities would not meet the intent or objectives of the State Wildlife Grants Program. Each strategy must address factors affecting the health of the nation's fish and wildlife, particularly those species in greatest need of conservation. The goal is to manage fish and wildlife populations and their habitat as a public trust, maintained as a national heritage.

Each state strategy must contain eight elements addressing species, habitats, problems, conservation actions, monitoring, strategy review, interagency coordination, and public involvement.

USFWS Required Eight Elements	Oregon's Approach
1. Gather information on the distribution and abundance of fish and wildlife species.	Identify <u>Strategy Species</u> , those most in need of conservation, and summarize key information about them. Improve Oregon's ability to map species distribution using both observational data and modeling. Use species data to help identify COAs where conservation activities would benefit the greatest number of Strategy Species.
2. Describe location and relative condition of key habitats and community types essential to conservation of these species.	Identify <u>Strategy Habitats</u> to conserve a broad suite of species that reflect the diversity of fish and wildlife in the state, and map COAs for Strategy Habitats, areas where conservation activities would have the greatest benefit and chances of success.
3. Describe problems which may adversely affect these species or their habitats. Identify information needed to improve conservation of species and habitats.	Describe limiting factors for Strategy Species and Habitats, and data gaps where information is needed. The Strategy describes conservation issues and limiting factors for each Strategy Species and Strategy Habitat, and describes seven <u>Key Conservation Issues</u> identified because of their impacts to Strategy Species and Habitats throughout the state. The Strategy lists <u>fish and wildlife diseases</u> occurring in Oregon, and provides management approaches.
4. Describe necessary conservation actions for species and habitats.	Outline conservation actions for Strategy Species and Strategy Habitats. Identify <u>Conservation Opportunity Areas</u> where conservation activities would benefit the greatest number of Strategy Species and Strategy Habitats. Provide management actions and approaches to counter Oregon's Key Conservation Issues and diseases that threaten our fish and wildlife populations.
5. Propose ways to monitor the effectiveness of these conservation actions and ways to adapt actions as information or conditions change.	Describe guidance for <u>monitoring</u> species and habitats.



USFWS Required Eight Elements	Oregon's Approach
6. Describe procedures to review the Strategy at regular intervals (not to exceed 10 years).	Describe how <u>reviews and updates</u> will occur.
7. Coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies and tribes that manage significant land and water areas or administer significant programs that affect species and habitat conservation.	Coordinate extensively with federal, state, county, and local governments, tribes, non-governmental organizations, interest groups, and private landowners in developing and implementing the Strategy.
8. Engage the public in planning and implementing the Strategy.	<p>A. Seek guidance from a <u>Stakeholder Advisory Committee</u>: a broad-based, geographically balanced committee representing outdoor interest groups, conservation groups, hunting and fishing interests, tourism interests, local governments, and organizations working with landowners.</p> <p>B. Seek public input through public presentations. Solicit comments via an open public comment period. Incorporate public comment into the final version.</p> <p>C. Engage Oregonians throughout the state as the Strategy is updated and encourage participation in Strategy actions.</p>



*Photo Credit: Sam Beeb, Ecotrust*

## HOW TO USE THE STRATEGY

The Oregon Conservation Strategy outlines priorities: [Strategy Species](#), [Strategy Habitats](#), [Conservation Opportunity Areas](#), [Key Conservation Issues](#), and recommends voluntary actions for conservation in Oregon. These priorities were originally developed using the best scientific information available to the ODFW and partners in 2006, and they were updated in 2016 as part of a 10-year revision. The Conservation Strategy builds on Oregon’s planning and regulatory framework and works within the existing legal structure, but it is not regulatory.

Although Oregon’s fish and wildlife are managed by ODFW, the habitats they depend on are managed by a patchwork of different types of land ownership and uses throughout the state. Conservation outcomes for Strategy Species, Strategy Habitats, and COAs depend upon communication of common priorities and shared stewardship from all Oregonians.

The [Funding, Implementation, and Review](#) section provides additional resources and information for implementing the Oregon Conservation Strategy.

## INFORMATION FOR COMMUNITIES, LOCAL PLANNERS, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Communities, planners, and other organizations have a crucial role in stewardship of Oregon’s natural resources. Some suggestions to help community planners, local governments, counties, metropolitan planning organizations, tribes, federal and state agencies, nonprofit organizations, corporate interests, and large landowners find relevant information in the Strategy include:

- Grant applications for conservation and restoration projects
  - Actions to benefit [Strategy Species](#)
  - Actions to benefit [Strategy Habitats](#)
  - Voluntary conservation actions to benefit [Conservation Opportunity Areas](#)

- Guide to [incentives programs](#) for property owners. Cities and local governments can help property owners access information about incentives programs and implement conservation actions.
- Land use actions – Considering natural resources information early in the process can help with energy planning, land use planning, and more. To be informed of areas to avoid for development or areas to consider for mitigation actions, see:
  - Maps about fish, wildlife, and habitats available on ODFW [Compass](#)
  - Voluntary conservation actions to benefit [Conservation Opportunity Areas](#)
- Regional planning and local comprehensive planning

## INFORMATION FOR PRIVATE LANDOWNERS

Across Oregon, motivated landowners are removing invasive plants, replacing culverts, restoring wetlands, establishing native plants, and taking large and small actions to enhance habitat for fish and wildlife. Landowners with an urban backyard, a few acres in the foothills of the Cascades, or a large ranch in eastern Oregon can all take action to benefit Strategy Species and Strategy Habitats. Some suggestions to help landowners find relevant information in the Strategy include:

- Grant applications for conservation and restoration projects:
  - Actions to benefit [Strategy Species](#)
  - Actions to benefit [Strategy Habitats](#)
  - Voluntary conservation actions to benefit [Conservation Opportunity Areas](#)
  - Guide to [incentives programs](#) for property owners. Cities and local governments can help property owners access information about incentives programs and implement conservation actions.
- Stakeholders recognize several Challenges and Opportunities for Private Landowners to Initiate Conservation Actions, and include this as a major Key Conservation Issue. For an in-depth discussion and potential solutions, see the [Challenges and Opportunities for Private Landowners](#) section.

For more information, see [Strategy Implementation](#).

## OREGON NEARSHORE STRATEGY

The Oregon Conservation Strategy includes both inland and nearshore habitats and species within a single State Wildlife Action Plan. However, because of multiple considerations, including that the nearshore is entirely in the public trust, the ODFW has developed a discrete section of the Conservation

Strategy to address nearshore resource issues – the [Oregon Nearshore Strategy](#). The ODFW’s Marine Resources Program has undertaken this effort, working collaboratively and in complement with the Conservation Strategy team, to identify actions for the ODFW and our partners to undertake in the nearshore to augment conservation and management goals for these unique and highly valued resources.





*Photo Credit: Keith Kohl, ODFW*

## FUNDING, IMPLEMENTATION, AND REVIEW

### FUNDING

The Oregon Conservation Strategy identifies priorities for conservation actions and for collecting further information about Oregon's species and habitats. Currently, there is insufficient funding and capacity to address all of the priorities. As the lead entity for developing and updating the Strategy, the ODFW supports collaborative efforts to identify funding for the conservation priorities identified in the Strategy. Funding is needed for the ongoing conservation efforts of the ODFW and partner organizations to implement actions identified in the Strategy.

The ODFW recognizes that providing leadership in advancing implementation of the Strategy is a key agency role that needs to be further developed regarding capacity for project coordination and oversight, prioritizing and initiating ODFW-led actions, monitoring species, and seeking project funding. At present, the ODFW's Wildlife Conservation Program is inadequately funded to meet these needs. The 2015-17 ODFW budget request included an outline for \$1,000,000 of state general funds for "Oregon Conservation Strategy Implementation". The agency request was intended to provide staffing to conduct survey and inventory work on at-risk species identified in the Strategy. The requested funding was not included in the final 2015 legislatively approved budget. However, the 2015 legislature did pass, and the governor signed, a significant bill (HB 2402) that established a Task Force for funding fish, wildlife, and related outdoor recreation and education. The law directed the Task Force to develop recommendations for legislation that strengthen the ODFW's ability to carry out its conservation and related programs, including the identification of alternative funding sources and recommendations on how to better achieve the objectives of the Conservation Program. It is anticipated that this effort will assist in the achievement of the ODFW's mission and address the challenge of funding Strategy implementation. Continued successes with implementation of the Strategy will need ODFW expertise and project funding to maximize the number and quality of projects completed to benefit Oregon's wildlife.



## IMPLEMENTATION

### Everyone Can Help

Although the ODFW leads the effort to develop and update the Species, Habitats, and Conservation Opportunity Areas identified in the Strategy, partnering organizations are essential to success. Partners include federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, conservation organizations, outdoor recreation groups including guides, hunters, and anglers, private landowners, and related organizations (e.g., SWCDs, watershed councils, irrigation districts, etc.). Some ideas for implementation include:

- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife:
  - Continue to support the ODFW's ongoing conservation and restoration work statewide. ODFW's fish and wildlife biologists have strong local knowledge and invaluable relationships with local partners to help guide conservation opportunities and find economies-of-scale.
  - Continue to use the Conservation Strategy to: update Wildlife Management Area plans, help prioritize Access & Habitat Program projects, and assist in prioritizing [Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program](#) projects.
  - Use the Conservation Strategy to inform agency workplans. Focus survey and conservation efforts on priority Strategy Species. Provide updates on implementation progress to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission.
  - Use the Conservation Strategy for guidance when responding to emerging issues. For example, develop and provide recommendations to agencies responding to drought that offer relief for fish and wildlife species. Continue to participate in the implementation and update of Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy, as well as using the Strategy to shape ODFW input on state and federal public forest and rangeland management planning efforts.
- Outdoor interest groups, businesses, travel organizations, landowners, and conservation partners:
  - Select Strategy Species and/or Strategy Habitats and use the list of conservation actions to guide conservation and restoration efforts.
  - Promote efforts to get outdoors for recreation and [wildlife viewing](#).
  - Find information on Strategy Species and Strategy Habitats to inform conservation projects.
  - Get involved with [citizen science](#) efforts to report wildlife sightings.

- Business owners can promote local or ‘conservation certified’ products, engage employees in restoration efforts, [support habitat protection investments](#), and improve habitat on company lands.
- Universities and citizen science groups:
  - Address research needs and data gaps identified in the Strategy.
  - Collect biological data to inform mapped or modeled data on Strategy Species and Strategy Habitats.
  - Report monitoring results to online central databases (for example, eBird, Oregon Biodiversity Information Center) that can be used for adaptive management and evaluation.
  - Report project information to centralized project tracking programs, such as the [Conservation Registry](#).
  - Provide and interpret information about the Strategy. For example, the interpretive posters on wildlife crossings at Lava Butte Visitor Center in Bend reach and inform a wide audience on an emerging conservation issue.
- State and federal agencies, counties, and municipalities:
  - Continue to utilize the priorities in the Conservation Strategy to administer funds and programs, manage lands, develop or revise management plans, monitor species, and restore habitats.

### **Statewide Framework for Strategy Implementation**

Through the 2016 update process, stakeholders identified a continuing need for a statewide forum to keep partners accountable to progress, evaluate how local actions fit into the big picture, share ‘lessons learned’, and find economies-of-scale. The forum should include the conservation community, public land managers, private landowners, and related groups. This role could be filled by an existing statewide group or development of a new one. One example could be an annual expanded ODFW Conservation Leaders Group meeting focused on the Strategy. The statewide forum could consider the results of local conservation actions and provide information back to the ODFW. If needed, a smaller implementation team could meet more frequently, involving partner organizations and other state agencies in developing a workplan, budgets, and funding strategy.

### **Ecoregional Conservation Action Teams**

Local conservation actions and partnerships are the heart of the Conservation Strategy, and success depends upon supporting these efforts.

Through the 2016 update process, stakeholders identified a need to support conservation action teams at the local or ecoregional level. These teams could define conservation goals and practical implementation plans, and could report annually at statewide meetings. Teams could be organized to complement existing efforts, without creating new teams unless necessary. Teams could be organized by ecoregion, involving partners to best meet local conservation needs. Teams could be organized by the ODFW and/or partners.

Conservation action teams may include: federal, state, and local agencies, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, land trusts, watershed councils, conservation organizations, landowner representatives, and other organizations. Teams could support key efforts, such as the [Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program](#) (in the [Willamette Valley](#)) and the [Sage-Grouse Conservation Partnership](#) (in the [Northern Basin and Range](#)).

Example actions for the teams include:

- Develop an “Adopt a Conservation Opportunity Area” program, allowing local organizations to assist with reporting on ongoing or recommended priority actions in a COA.
- Consider where conservation easements or land acquisition are most strategically needed, or what other tools may be most effective in achieving desired outcomes.
- Promote fish and wildlife habitat connectivity among Conservation Opportunity Areas and other priority landscapes.

## REVIEW PLAN

ODFW will continue coordination with federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, conservation organizations, outdoor recreation organizations, and other groups to evaluate, implement, and review the Strategy. Coordination efforts will follow the outline above, as well as continuing existing efforts through ODFW’s district offices.

The Strategy website will offer updated content, including new guidance documents, species monitoring plans, citizen science efforts, local conservation efforts, potential partners, and other supporting information. The ODFW anticipates updating the supporting information annually to the extent possible. Changes will not be made to the Eight Required Elements without U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) consultation and review.

The ODFW will lead the next comprehensive review of the Strategy, covering all USFWS requirements, no later than October 1, 2025.

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## STRATEGY SPOTLIGHT: COYOTE OAKS EASEMENT

Art and Anita Johnson have spent the last 20 years working to restore ecological function to their land. The fruits of their labor are now preserved with a conservation easement on 152 acres north of Fern Ridge Reservoir near Eugene.

The Johnson family has a long, deep connection to Coyote Oaks; it's been in the family since 1939. They have enjoyed managing it. Under the conservation easement terms, they will continue on with help from the McKenzie River Trust.

The Coyote Oaks conservation easement adds oak riparian corridor, wet prairie, forested and open water wetlands, and grasslands to a growing conservation complex in the Lower Coyote Creek Conservation Area (LCCCA).

Along with the McKenzie River Trust, the Long Tom Watershed Council, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Army Corps of Engineers have all chipped in, working towards a vision for the 1,500-acre LCCCA. The Coyote Oaks property will benefit many priority habitats and species identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, Willamette Valley Synthesis, and the USFWS Recovery Plan for Prairie Species of Western Oregon and Southwestern Washington. These include Willamette daisy, Western Meadowlark, Slender-billed Nuthatch, cutthroat trout, and western gray squirrel. The area also supports waterfowl, river otter, elk, and bobcat.

The Johnsons' vision is that their property adds to the complex of land between Kirk Pond and Franklin Road, protected through public ownership or voluntary private land conservation for the long run. The Johnson family has given decades of hard work and thoughtful planning to their commitment to the land. The easement is the culmination of that work, and a new permanent anchor site for fish and wildlife.

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*Photo Credit: USFS*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since 2006, a great number of private landowners, conservation groups, watershed councils, land trusts, outdoor interest groups, tribes, municipalities, agencies, consultants, and others have helped to implement many of the recommendations in the Oregon Conservation Strategy. For the 10-year update, many of these organizations and individuals contributed ideas and expertise.

**The ODFW thanks everyone who contributes toward the Oregon Conservation Strategy goals of protecting Oregon's fish, wildlife, and habitats!**

### STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

For the 10-year update, ODFW convened a Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The committee reviewed drafts of updated content, offered guidance for keeping the content and format relevant to their partner organizations, and circulated notifications for the review process throughout the state.

Association of Oregon Counties, Mark Nystrom (Bob Bovett, alternate); Audubon Society of Portland, Bob Sallinger; Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts, Kelley Beamer; Defenders of Wildlife, Elizabeth Ruther; Institute for Natural Resources, Sara Vickerman; The Nature Conservancy, Cathy Macdonald; Network of Oregon Watershed Councils, Ryan Gordon; Oregon Association of Conservation Districts, Mark Saelens (Jerry Nicolescu, alternate); Oregon Cattlemen's Association, Jerome Rosa; Oregon Chapter of American Fisheries Society, Troy Brandt; Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society, Leslie Bliss-Ketchum; Oregon Farm Bureau, Jennifer Dresler and MaryAnne Nash; Oregon Forest Industries Council, Seth Barnes; Oregon Habitat Joint Ventures, Bruce Taylor; Oregon Hunters Association, Steve Hagan; Oregon Small Woodlands Association, John Westall (Jim James, alternate); Oregon Wild, Quinn Read; Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation, Tim Greseth; Oregonians For Food and Shelter, Scott Dahlman; Oregon State University Extension, Dana Sanchez; Portland Metro, Jonathan Soll; Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Rick Larson (Dave Wiley, alternate); Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Fund, Mia Sheppard; Travel Oregon, Kristin Dahl; Trout Unlimited, Tom Wolf; Trust for Public Land, Kristin Kovalik; The Wild Salmon Center, Greg Block



Bureau of Land Management, Lee Folliard and Bruce Hollen; National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, Rob Walton; Natural Resources Conservation Service, Tom Makowski, Jeremy Maestas, and Michael Merrill; Oregon Department of Agriculture, Margaret Matter; Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Rian vanden Hooff; Oregon Department of Forestry, Andy Yost; Oregon Department of Land Conservation & Development, Amanda Punton; Oregon Department of Transportation, Cidney Howard and Chris Maguire; Oregon Fish & Wildlife Commission Liaison, Holly Akenson; Oregon Water Resources Department, Alyssa Mucken and R. Craig Kohanek; Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Renee Davis-Born and Eric Hartstein; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Rollie White and Craig Rowland; U.S. Forest Service, Josh Chapman; U.S. Geological Survey, Nicole DeCrappeo

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Technical experts helped update the content to reference current efforts, new science, and relevant initiatives. Organizations and individuals who served as technical reviewers or contributors throughout the 2016 Conservation Strategy update included:

American Bird Conservancy, Bob Altman; Association of Northwest Steelheaders, Norman Ritchie and Bill Kremers; Bureau of Indian Affairs, Anna Schmidt; City of Salem, Patricia Farrell; Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District, Clair Klock; Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Natural resources program leaders and biologists; Greenbelt Land Trust, Mike Pope; Independent, Kristi Boken, Jay Bowerman, Laura Brophy, Tom Burke, Charlotte Corkran, Gregory Green, Jane Hartline, Tim Hiller, Frank Isaacs, Gary Ivey, James Bergdahl, Rebecca O'Neil, Pat Ormsbee, Chris Rombough, Dana Ross, and Al Smith; Institute for Applied Ecology, Rebecca Currin; Institute for Natural Resources – Oregon State University, Jimmy Kagan; Institute for Natural Resources – Portland State University, Theresa Burscu; Intertwine Alliance (Portland Metro area), Michael Wetter and David Cohen; Klamath Bird Observatory, John Alexander and Kate Halstead; League of Oregon Cities, Tracy Rutten and Erin Doyle; Lewis and Clark College, Carol Macbeth; The Nature Conservancy, Steve Buttrick, Dan Bell, Debbie Pickering, Gway Kirchner, Leslie Bach, Mark Stern, Michael Schindel, and Ken Popper; Oregon Biodiversity Information Center, Eleanor Gaines; Oregon Department of Agriculture, Kelly Amsberry, Jordan Brown, John Byers, Jim LaBonte, and Bob Meinke; Oregon Department of Energy, Todd Cornett; Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Heather Tugaw, Smita Metha, Wade Peerman, Debra Sturdevant, and Karla Urbanowicz; Oregon Department of Forestry, Kyle Abraham, Marganne Allen, and Brad Knotts; Oregon Department of Land Conservation & Development, Katherine Daniels and Jeff Weber; Oregon Department of State Lands, Kathy Verble; Oregon Invasive Species Council, Paul Heimowitz and Wyatt Williams; Oregon State University, John Bailey, Meghan Dalton, Dan Edge, Clint Epps, William Gerth, Christian Hagan, Chris Marshall, Bob Mason, Phil Mote, Trent Seeger, and Lindsey Thurman; Oregon/Washington Partners in Flight, Aaron Holmes; Oregon Wildlife Institute, Dave Vesely; Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Fran Recht; Portland State University – Center for Lakes and Reservoirs, Mark Sytsma and Robyn Draheim; Sierra Club, Rhett Lawrence; Tillamook Estuary

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*Photo Credit: Dave Budeau*

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

The following is a reference list of common acronyms used in the Oregon Conservation Strategy:

ACS: American Community Survey  
AOC: Association of Oregon Counties  
BLM: United States Bureau of Land Management  
BM: Blue Mountains  
BOEM: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management  
CMECS: Coastal and Marine Ecological Classification Standard  
COA: Conservation Opportunity Area  
COLT: Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts  
CP: Columbia Plateau  
CR: Coast Range  
CHAT: Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool  
DDT: dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane  
DEQ: Oregon Department of Environmental Quality  
DLCD: Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development  
DOGAMI: Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries  
DOW: Defenders of Wildlife  
DPS: Distinct Population Segment  
DSL: Oregon Department of State Lands  
EC: East Cascades  
EPA: United States Environmental Protection Agency  
ESA: Endangered Species Act  
ESU: Evolutionarily Significant Unit  
FAA: Federal Aviation Administration  
FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency  
FERC: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

INR: Institute for Natural Resources  
IWRs: Integrated Water Resources Strategy  
KCI: Key Conservation Issue  
KBO: Klamath Bird Observatory  
KM: Klamath Mountains  
MHHW: Mean Higher High Water  
MHW: Mean High Water  
MLLW: Mean Lower Low Water  
MLW: Mean Low Water  
MMPA: Marine Mammal Protection Act  
NBR: Northern Basin and Range  
NMFS: National Marine Fisheries Service  
NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NOWC: Network of Oregon Watershed Councils  
NS: Nearshore  
NW CSC: Northwest Climate Science Center  
OAR: Oregon Administrative Rules  
ODA: Oregon Department of Agriculture  
ODF: Oregon Department of Forestry  
ODFW: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
ODOE: Oregon Department of Energy  
ODOT: Oregon Department of Transportation  
OGWC: Oregon Global Warming Commission  
OHA: Oregon Health Authority  
OISC: Oregon Invasive Species Council  
ONS: Oregon Nearshore Strategy  
OPAC: Ocean Policy Advisory Council  
OPRD: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department  
ORBIC: Oregon Biodiversity Information Center  
ORS: Oregon Revised Statutes  
OSMB: Oregon State Marine Board  
OSP: Oregon State Police  
OSU: Oregon State University  
OWEB: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
OWRD: Oregon Water Resources Department  
PIF: Partners in Flight  
PSU: Portland State University  
PFMC: Pacific Fishery Management Council  
PSMFC: Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission  
RMEF: Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

ROV: Remotely Operated Vehicle  
SageCON: Sage-Grouse Conservation Partnership  
SCUBA: Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus  
SMU: Species Management Unit for Native Fish  
SWG: State Wildlife Grants  
SWCD: Soil and Water Conservation District  
TNC: The Nature Conservancy  
TPL: Trust for Public Land  
USACE: United States Army Corps of Engineers  
UO: University of Oregon  
USCG: United States Coast Guard  
USFS: United States Forest Service  
USFWS: United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
USGS: United States Geological Survey  
WAFWA: Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
WC: West Cascades  
WV: Willamette Valley