

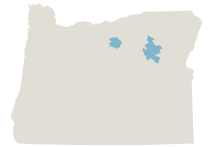


# John Day Basin *Fish Habitat Initiative*

AQUATIC HABITAT FOR NATIVE FISH SPECIES

## *The John Day Basin Partnership (JDBP)*

is focusing its FIP-supported native fish habitat initiative in three priority subwatersheds of the larger 8,100 sq. mi. John Day River Basin. These priority areas include Butte-Thirtymile Creeks in the Lower Mainstem John Day; North Fork John Day Headwaters; and the mid-upper Middle Fork John Day. Historic and present-day land and water use practices and a changing climate have altered the condition of aquatic habitat contributing to the reduction in productivity and abundance of native fish populations.



## Funding

OWEB awarded \$4,000,000 in funding that leveraged \$6,366,819 in matching funds

### Technical Assistance

\$951,506 / 23.78%  
 11 grants

### Monitoring

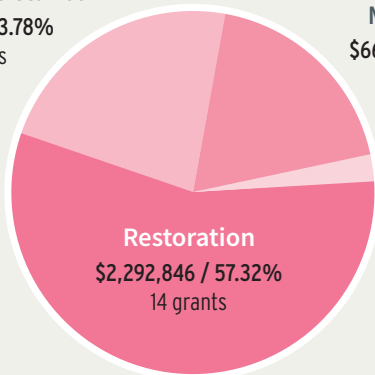
\$663,155 / 16.59%  
 4 grants

### Stakeholder Engagement

\$92,493 / 2.31%  
 2 grants

### Restoration

\$2,292,846 / 57.32%  
 14 grants



## Benefits

- Protection of high-quality upland and aquatic habitat
- Increased stream flow during low water periods
- Increased connectivity and quantity of floodplain habitat
- Enhanced surface and ground water connections
- Improved juvenile salmonid rearing and overwintering survival
- Improved water quality
- Improved native plant communities in riparian areas
- Reduced erosion and sediment inputs
- Improved spawning gravel quality and spawning success
- Increased complexity of aquatic habitat

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) grant program is a bold, new conservation approach that supports high-performing partnerships to implement strategic restoration actions and measure ecological outcomes through coordinated monitoring. In January 2019, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board awarded an Implementation Focused Investment Partnership grant to the JDBP. This report documents projects for which funding was obligated during the first biennium of the initiative (2019 to 2021) to meet FIP initiative objectives. Work completed under the FIP grant program is part of a much larger on-going collaborative effort of federal, state and local agencies, tribes, private landowners, and non-governmental organizations in the John Day Basin. Accomplishments included in the report only reflect actions completed with OWEB FIP funding.

## PARTNERS

Blue Mountain Forest Partners • Blue Mountain Land Trust • Bonneville Power Administration • Bureau of Land Management • Bureau of Reclamation • Burns Paiute Tribe • Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation • Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon • Gilliam County Soil & Water Conservation District • Gilliam East John Day Watershed Council • Grant Soil & Water Conservation District • Mid John Day-Bridge Creek Watershed Council • Monument Soil & Water Conservation District • Morrow County Soil & Water Conservation District • North Fork John Day Watershed Council • Oregon Department of Agriculture • Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife • Oregon Department of Parks & Recreation • Ritter Land Management Team • Sherman County Soil & Water Conservation District • South Fork John Day Watershed Council • Sustainable Northwest • The Freshwater Trust • Trout Unlimited • United States Forest Service: Malheur National Forest, Umatilla National Forest Wallow-Whitman National Forest • USDA: Natural Resource Conservation Service • U.S. Department of Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service • Wheeler County Soil & Water Conservation District

## GOAL

A John Day Basin with clean water and healthy watersheds sufficient to provide for the sustainable ecological, economic, and cultural well-being of the basin.

## STRATEGIES

- Dedicate land and water to restoration and preservation of stream habitat
- Reconnect floodplains
- Riparian restoration and management

- Channel modifications and side-channel/off-channel restoration
- Install large woody debris structures and rock weirs
- Fish passage restoration
- Water quality and water quantity impacts

## IMPLEMENTATION (2019-2021)

**191**

ACRES OF RIPARIAN HABITAT PROTECTED AND IMPROVED BY EXCLUDING LIVESTOCK

**1490**

LARGE WOOD AND BEAVER DAM ANALOG STRUCTURES INSTALLED

**283**

ACRES TREATED TO INCREASE RIPARIAN PLANT COMMUNITIES

**138**

FLOODPLAIN ACRES RECONNECTED

**13**

MILES OF RIPARIAN FENCING INSTALLED

**17**

MILES OF STREAM TREATED TO INCREASE RIPARIAN PLANT COMMUNITIES

**251 + 36**

POOLS + RIFFLES CREATED TO INCREASE INSTREAM HABITAT COMPLEXITY

**5**

STREAM MILES OF HABITAT MADE ACCESSIBLE TO NATIVE FISH BY REMEDIATING FISH PASSAGE BARRIERS

**6**

INSTREAM HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT DESIGNS PRODUCED

**46**

MILES OF STREAM CONNECTED AND IMPROVED

## OUTCOMES

### Near Term 0-10 YEARS

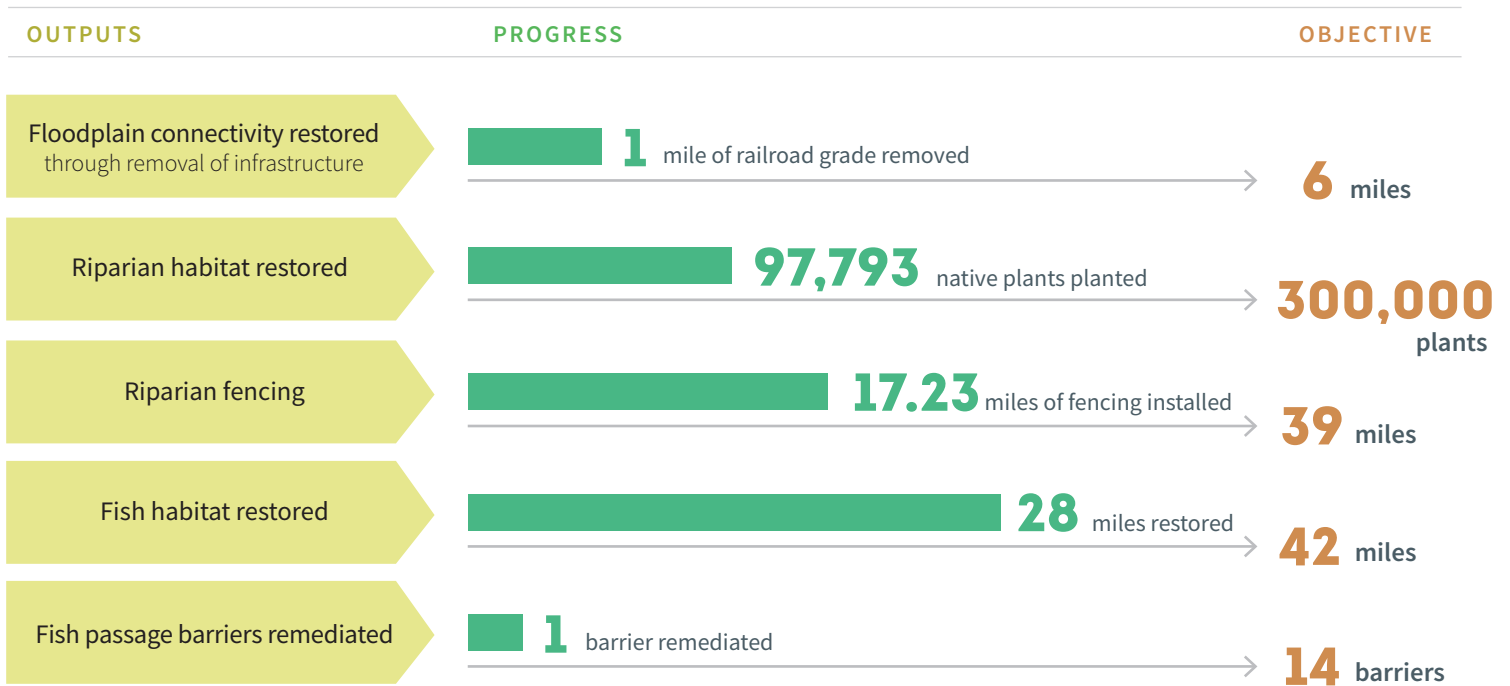
- Decreasing trend in summer instream water temperature
- Increasing trend in summer instream flow
- Improved habitat diversity index
- Increase in woody species density and stream shade potential
- Increasing trend in summer steelhead and spring Chinook freshwater productivity

### Long Term 10+ YEARS

- Sustained increased productivity in summer steelhead and spring Chinook freshwater productivity

# FIP Initiative Progress, Biennium 1

Progress on metrics reflects implementation supported by OWEB funding, and does not represent all progress achieved via other funding sources.



## Monitoring Approach

To evaluate progress, the Partnership will use an integrated restoration-monitoring approach based in an adaptive management context. JDBP will use existing data, new monitoring, and, when necessary (and appropriately documented, such as through the BPA “Atlas” process) professional judgement, to establish baseline conditions to judge progress towards basin-wide and sub-basin conservation targets.

The JDBP will group projects into three different monitoring tiers, with variable levels of monitoring effort for each tier. Communication between monitoring and restoration partners will continue to be instrumental to ensure the appropriate monitoring tiers and targets are applied to each project. Milestones will be set for each project to allow for cost effective monitoring which provides an assessment of progress and the ability to adapt subsequent implementation years if needed.

The Strategic Action Plan will be reevaluated every two years. Modifications will be based on progress towards milestones, ancillary considerations, and lessons learned.



# Adaptive Management

## Partnership

### CHALLENGES

JDBP structure changed in the first biennium as two steering committee members stepped down to focus on other priorities



### LESSONS LEARNED

Ample community support and strong partnerships enabled the JDBP to quickly replace the steering committee members who stepped down, and to add two new partner organizations.



### ADAPTATIONS

Vacant steering committee positions were filled with eager, engaged and capable partners. Two new organizations also formally signed the JDBP MOU, bringing the number of total partners up to 30.

## Restoration

### CHALLENGES

Issues securing permits and cultural clearance resulted in delays in restoration project implementation



### LESSONS LEARNED

The JDBP's Project Decision Making Framework was modified to require that all Special Use Permits and Section 106 (cultural) Clearance are obtained prior to applying for implementation funds.



### ADAPTATIONS

Project implementers are encouraged to apply for technical assistance funds to help with permitting and cultural clearance planning activities. Ensuring these preparatory activities are completed is one way to keep individual projects and the larger initiative moving forward on the intended timeline.

## Monitoring

### CHALLENGES

A diverse suite of restoration projects presents a challenge to maintaining consistency in what is monitored across projects



### LESSONS LEARNED

Using the results chain to articulate relationships between habitat characteristics and fish production has helped to identify key parameters for monitoring across disparate FIP geographies.



### ADAPTATIONS

Focusing monitoring on key parameters identified in the results chain can provide consistency across restoration projects and FIP geographies.

## Engagement

### CHALLENGES

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the JDBP cancelled in-person landowner assistance events that had been scheduled.



### LESSONS LEARNED

Re-prioritizing activities within the stakeholder engagement campaign allowed the JDBP to proceed with actively engaging stakeholders despite restrictions on in-person meetings.



### ADAPTATIONS

JDBP partners shifted their focus to implement other aspects of the stakeholder engagement campaign including outreach mailers, social media, and the JDBP newsletter, and modified projects which required in-person meetings or trainings.