

Mid-Willamette East Small Grant Team

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News media contact: Susan Ortiz

Grants offered to landowners for waterway projects

Landowners looking for financial help to prevent erosion along streams, increase irrigation efficiency, or improve native fish habitat can apply for a grant tailored for these and similar small projects.

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Small Grant Program provides up to \$15,000 in Oregon Lottery funds for individual projects that help restore watershed elements such as creeks, rivers or wetlands. Projects must benefit aquatic species, wildlife or waterway health. At least 25 percent of the OWEB funds must be matched from other sources.

“The program is a good combination of on-the-ground benefits to watersheds with on-the-ground benefits to landowners,” said Meta Loftsgaarden, OWEB executive director.

Watershed councils, soil and water conservation districts and tribes submit applications on behalf of landowners. Teams with representatives from councils, districts and tribes have established priorities for types of projects to be funded under this program. Local evaluation committees review applications and forward recommendations for funding to OWEB.

Some examples of priority watershed concerns are instream process and function, fish passage, urban impact reduction, riparian process and function, wetland process and function, upland process and function, and water quality/irrigation. Examples of recently funded projects include riparian fencing, irrigation efficiency, wetland restoration, manure management and storage, and oak woodland restoration.

Anyone interested in applying should contact Susan Ortiz, who serves as the local Small Grant Team contact for the Middle Willamette East Small Grant Team (serving Marion, Linn, and a small portion of Clackamas County). Reach Ortiz at 503-391-9927 or susan.ortiz@marionswcd.net

The next application deadline is January 10, 2018. The review process takes approximately 60 days. Successful applicants have two years to complete the funded project.

The Small Grant Program has helped agricultural landowners comply with Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plans designed to ensure that agricultural operations protect water quality. More than 75 percent of program projects have supported the plans.

Since 2002, the Small Grant Program has awarded more than \$7.8 million to nearly 1,200 projects.

Other OWEB grant programs fund more complex projects and support a variety of related activities. For more information about OWEB activities and programs, visit www.oregon.gov/OWEB or call OWEB in Salem at 503-986-0178.

OWEB projects support the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds that emphasizes private, voluntary actions to restore wild salmon populations. OWEB is a state agency led by a policy oversight board. The agency provides grants and services to citizen groups, organizations and agencies working to restore healthy watersheds in Oregon. Funding comes from the Oregon Lottery as a result of a citizen initiative in 1998, sales of salmon license plates, federal salmon funds and other sources.

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