



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

OREGON 2014 CREP Annual Report

The Oregon Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

The Oregon Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a cooperative venture between the State of Oregon and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (FSA), with support from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), soil and water conservation districts, watershed councils, and other regional partnership organizations. CREP restores, enhances, and maintains streamside areas along agricultural lands to benefit fish, wildlife, and water quality. Landowners receive annual rental payments and financial incentives to plant trees and shrubs in riparian areas, install fencing and livestock watering facilities, and implement other approved conservation measures.



Photos above show the same area in Gilliam County, before and after CREP treatment.

2014 Enrollment

Oregon added 71 contracts in the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014 to enroll 2,487.51 acres, bringing the cumulative total to 41,920.3 acres.

Federal and State Financial Contributions

In partnership with Oregon's agricultural landowners, the State of Oregon and FSA have contributed significant resources toward riparian restoration through CREP. The approximate federal cost share for conservation practices in FFY 2014 was \$767,362, and the approximate annual rental payments and incentive payments totaled \$3,970,270. For the same time period, the State of Oregon's cost share contribution was \$435,190 and its total CREP expenditures were over \$1.27 million. The State has invested approximately \$20,840,000 in CREP since 1999.



Photos above show browse protectors installed through CREP participation along Badger Creek, a tributary to Mountain Creek in southeastern Wheeler County. Badger Creek is a highly productive steelhead habitat, providing cool-water refugia for steelhead spawning and rearing. Historic use of livestock grazing has resulted in eroding vertical banks, reduced channel complexity and a lack of riparian vegetation. This project will increase habitat complexity and erosional inputs on over one half of a mile of Badger Creek by using a combination of conservation strategies and funding partners.

State Coordination of Oregon CREP

Fostering effective technical assistance, coordination and partner communication is integral to the success of Oregon CREP. In addition to its contribution to the cost-share payments, the State of Oregon continues to support CREP in a variety of ways, some of which are described below.

State Programmatic Technical Assistance

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) funds and supports CREP technical assistance positions around the state. The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) works with local CREP technicians to provide technical review and development of planting plans when needed. The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) contributes staff time and expertise to the program in their analysis of instream water rights. The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) provides technical expertise, planning assistance and coordination with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

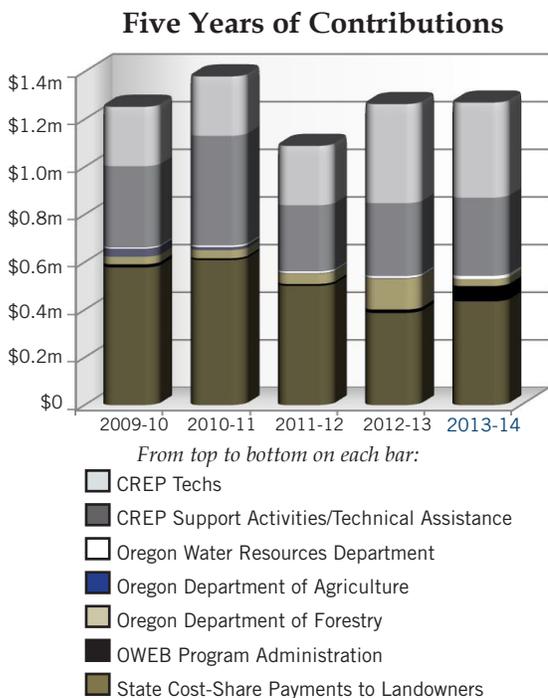
Budget Category	Contributions	
	10/1/13-9/30/14	1999 to Date
State Cost Share Payments	\$435,190	\$11,439,248
OWEB	\$64,702	\$610,996
Oregon Department of Forestry	\$28,462	\$656,603
Oregon Department of Agriculture	\$840	\$216,811
Oregon Water Resources Department	\$13,543	\$60,669
CREP / Technical Assistance	\$328,552	\$3,725,493
Watershed Tech Specialists	\$400,000	\$4,129,500
Total	\$1,271,289	\$20,839,320

Technical Assistance Grants

OWEB currently funds and manages eleven CREP Technical Assistance (TA) grants, covering 22 counties. These grants are two years in duration and are set to expire December 31, 2015. The TA grants provide staffing, training, and outreach support for local CREP technicians. These experts are a key element to implementing successful CREP projects. OWEB, ODF, ODA, FSA, and NRCS all contribute staff resources to the selection and evaluation of these TA programs, while OWEB provides additional staff resources in partner coordination, grant management, and program oversight.

Monitoring and Inspections

Funded by CREP TA grants, Oregon's local CREP technicians provide the program with project-level monitoring. Approximately 117 site inspections were reported by the CREP technicians during FFY 2014. In addition, OWEB is working with FSA on the finalization of a Memorandum of Agreement that will allow for the continued development of an OWEB-led monitoring and analysis of the effectiveness of the Oregon CREP program.



Promotion and Outreach

The state's CREP technicians provide the program with a strong, local outreach presence that fuels landowner interest and participation in the program. CREP technicians participate in regional events, organize direct mailings, develop outreach materials, and initiate contact with landowners. In FFY 2014, CREP technicians engaged in direct outreach to approximately 550 landowners, and provided many hundreds more with information about the program through websites, handouts, or other means.

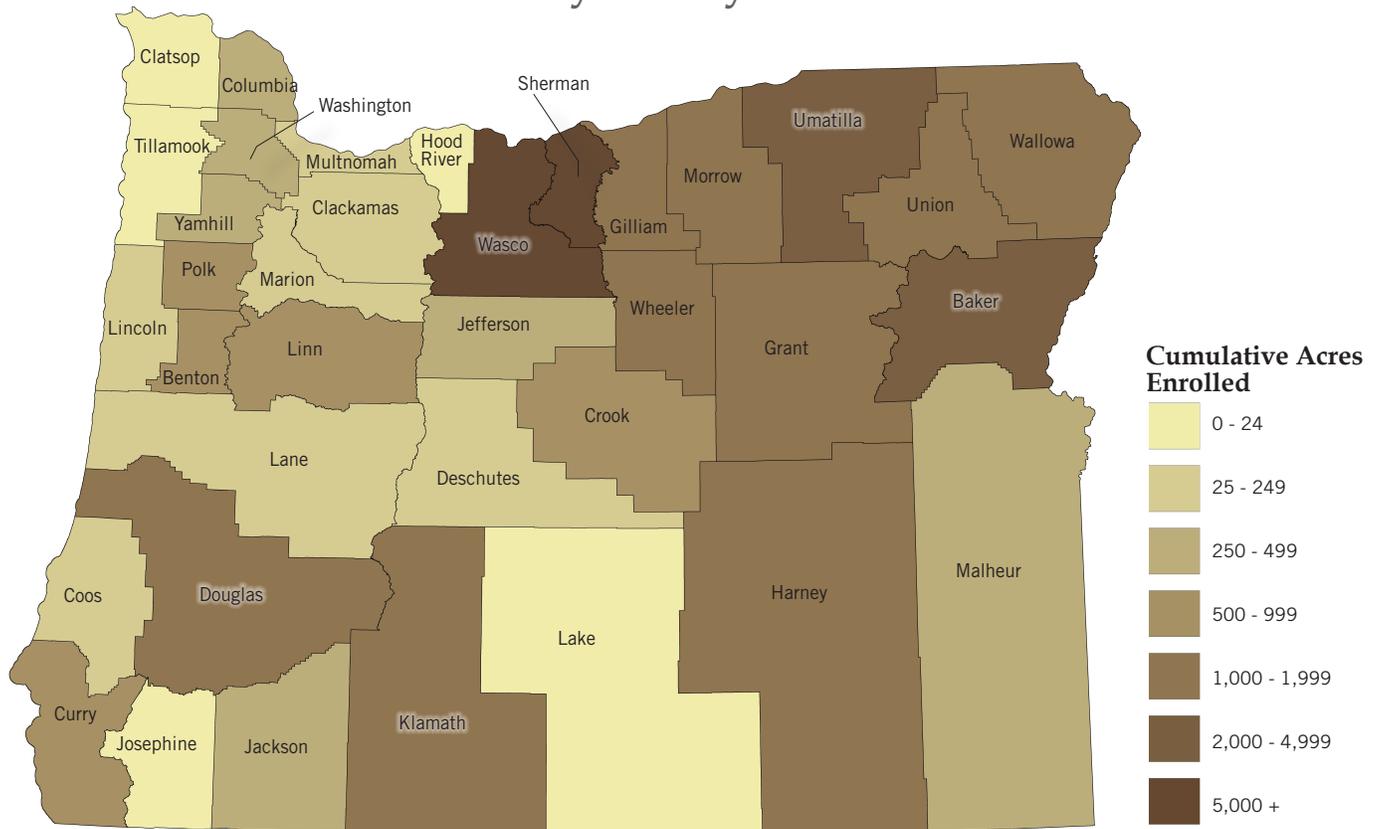


Protection of Instream Water



One of the unique elements of the Oregon CREP program is its ability to link the conservation of irrigated land with the legal protection of instream water. To receive irrigated land rental rights, the Oregon CREP program requires that landowners also lease water instream for the property enrolled for riparian buffers. This benefits the landowner through higher annual payments and benefits the public through incremental increases in instream flow which address significant aquatic resource limitations. In 2014, landowners leased 40.2 cubic feet per second (cfs) for instream flow benefits. The majority of these instream flow benefits have occurred in Klamath, Curry, Grant, Crook, and Gilliam Counties.

Cumulative Acre Enrollments by County



Evaluation and Recommendations

Cultural resource reviews continue to slow implementation of a number of CREP projects. NRCS provided OWEB with funding at the end of FFY 2014 in order to put additional resources toward the resolution of this issue. Oregon CREP partners now are working together to find solutions.

Partner communication is a key component of Oregon CREP. In FFY 2015, OWEB will be coordinating closely with new FSA staff to ensure that the federal/state partnership is delivering a quality program across Oregon.

Photo at right shows placement of browse protectors in Yamhill County, funded through CREP.



Acre and Water Enrollments by County

Acres Enrolled and Water Conserved <i>(active leases)</i>					
County	FFY 2014 Enrollment			Cumulative	
	Contracts	Acres	Water CFS	Contracts	Acres
Baker				58	3,087.5
Benton	1	11.90	0.53	34	740.9
Clackamas				17	96.1
Clatsop				3	23.9
Columbia	2	26.60		10	395.5
Coos			0.06	29	244.2
Crook	2	84.50	5.295	20	712.3
Curry			6.05	28	818.9
Deschutes				1	198.8
Douglas	8	77.75	2.348	91	1,298.8
Gilliam	1	45.30	4.5	75	1,978.7
Grant			5.565	43	1,611.1
Harney	3	68.70		29	1,813.9
Hood River					
Jackson	1	16.30		6	281.1
Jefferson				11	454.3
Josephine				1	1.5
Klamath			7.87	34	1,476.1
Lake					
Lane	5	14.90		40	205.3
Lincoln				13	198.0
Linn	8	66.40	0.02	63	900.2
Malheur				5	293.2
Marion	1	2.10	0.99	23	232.5
Morrow			1.433	76	1,451.2
Multnomah				4	94.5
Polk	1	7.90	1.898	47	522.2
Sherman				90	5,417.2
Tillamook					
Umatilla			1.42	206	2,834.9
Union	5	58.10		51	1,289.1
Wallowa	1	14.30		53	1,329.0
Wasco	20	1,710.30	0.711	277	9,980.0
Washington	3	25.60	1.268	62	388.6
Wheeler	5	224.06	0.214	44	1,078.6
Yamhill	4	32.80	0.024	68	472.2
Totals	71	2,487.51	40.196	1,612	41,920.3